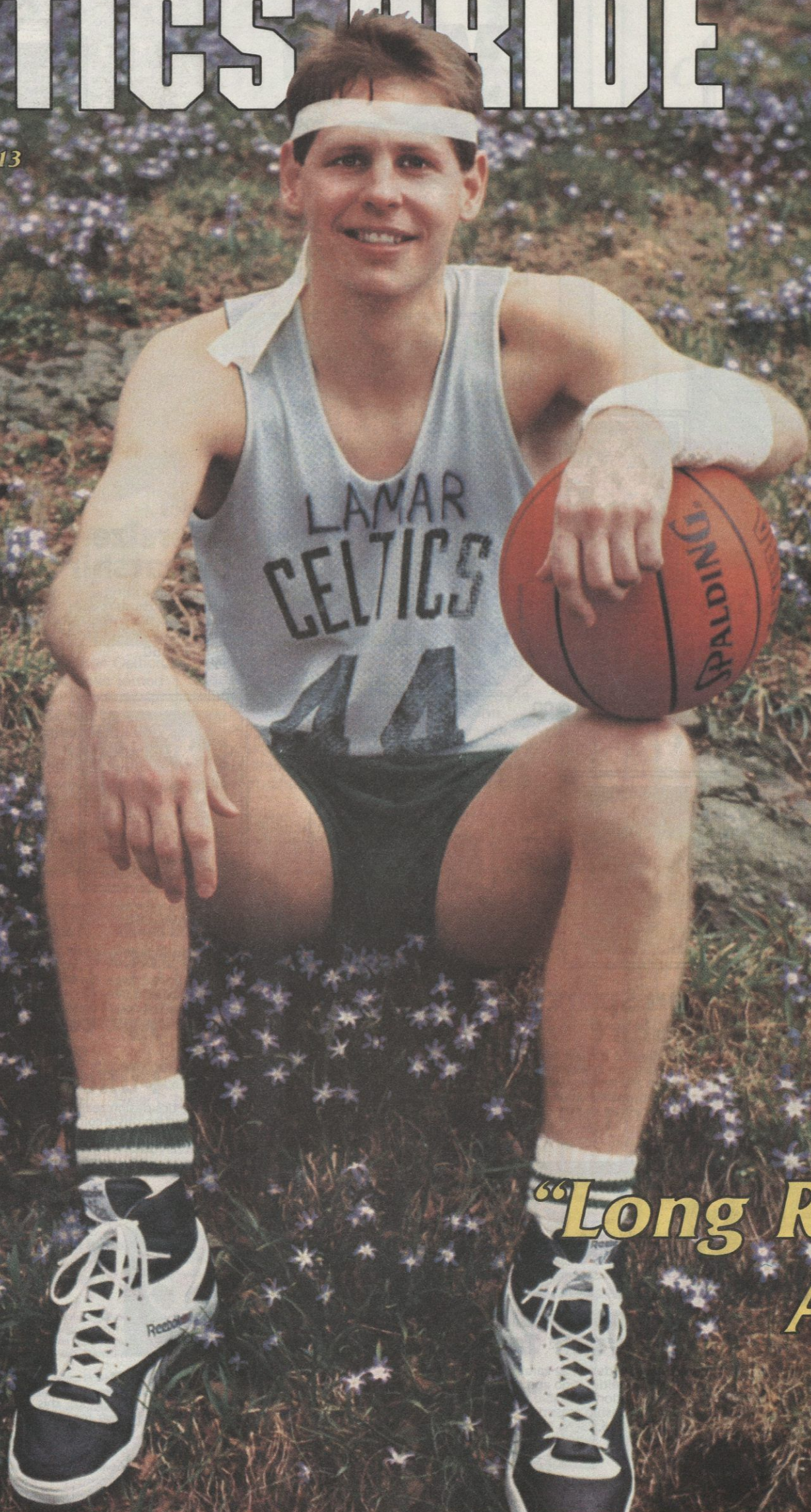


BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE



Volume 3, Issue 13
May 10, 1988
\$2.00



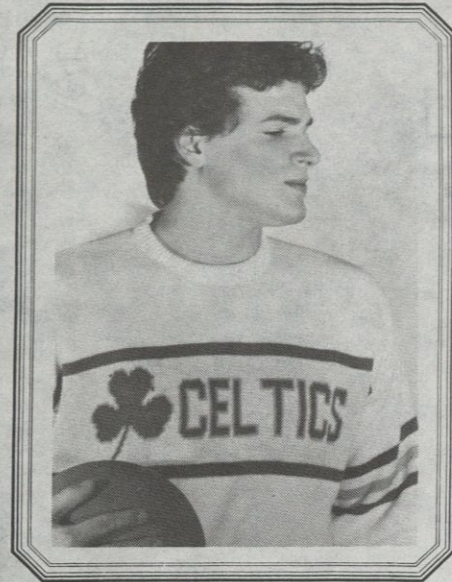
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Don Nelson: Returns to Coaching Next Year

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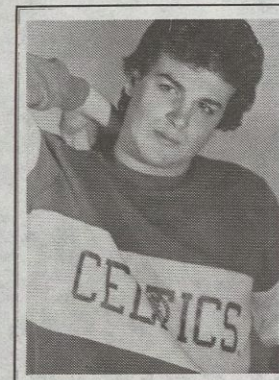
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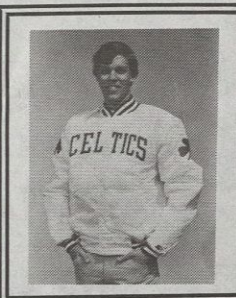
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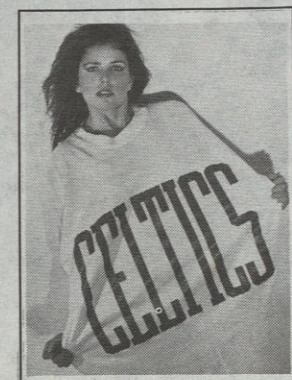
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As always, Celtics head coach K.C. Jones

played the role of host perfectly. First he ran his troops through their usual practice, including drills and a scrimmage. Then he entertained the group with a question-and-answer session.

Finally, all the members of the Celtics joined their guests for a lunch, giving them a chance to meet the team on an informal and personal basis. It was a great day for the two Boston powers to share.

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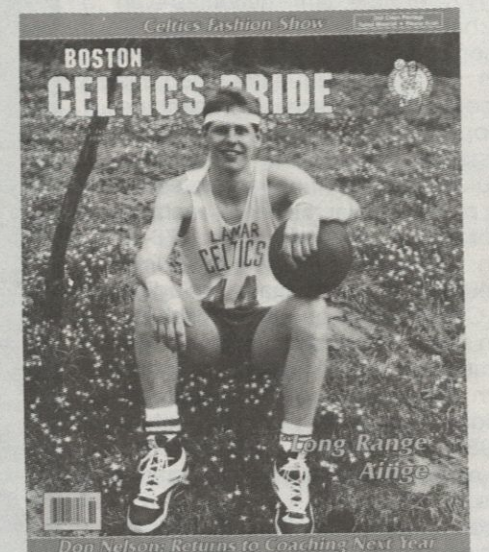
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VOLUME 3, ISSUE 13
NUMBER 53
MAY 10, 1988

Cover . . .

Danny Ainge has had a remarkable season to date, with his tenacious defense, constant hustle, and with a new addition to his arsenal . . . the three-point shot. Cover photography by Steve Lipofsky.



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4 Don Nelson's Return

Former coach of Milwaukee, Don Nelson has decided to return to the floor, this time hoping to spin his magic with the lowly Golden State Warriors.

8 Long-Range Ainge

Danny Ainge has tapped into the imaginations of all the Celtics faithful with his confidence in the three-point shot. Let's not overlook the myriad other contributions he makes to this team.

10 Richard Lapchick's Mission

Son of former Knicks and St. John's coach Joe Lapchick, Richard has started a profound program at Northeastern University, the Study of Sport in Society. Writer Jan Wrotnowski describes the life and goals of this fascinating man.

22 Celtics Are the Height of Fashion

In an always successful event the Celtics and their wives, families and friends staged their fashion show recently. Check out the sartorial splendor in this photo essay by Steve Lipofsky.

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To order these and other items, fill out form on p. 27—Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

MAY 10, 1988

Don Nelson Returns to Coaching Next Season

Warriors Start Here

By Bob Schron

The decision by Don Nelson, the Vice-President of the Golden State Warriors to return to coaching surprised few observers close to the NBA scene. Don Nelson is a very good basketball coach; he's a deep thinker about the game and its nuances, from individual technique, to bench coaching, to game preparation, to playoff series strategy where the game becomes even more challenging.

Nelson played eleven seasons with the Celtics and has frequently cited his reliance on Red Auerbach's coaching philosophy in his success. Nelson was an assistant under Larry Costello in Milwaukee after retiring as an active player, and took over the head coaching reins of the Bucks early in the 1976-77 season. His career mark with the Bucks was 540-344 for a .611 mark, including seven Central Division championships. Nelson's record in the playoffs is 42-46. He came extremely close to winning the Eastern Conference on two separate occasions — in 1981 (vs. Philadelphia) and 1987 (vs. Boston). Both of those series resulted in tense seventh game defeats.

Nelson resigned as VP of Basketball Operations/Head Coach of the Bucks after a season of well-publicized discord with owner Herbert Kohl. "The reason was clear," said former assistant and now Bucks' head coach Del Harris. "Nellie had a sound working relationship with Jim Fitzgerald (former Bucks owner). He could make moves and do that with the knowledge he had Jim's full backing. With a new owner, you have to work these things out all over again. I don't think it would have been a problem if Nellie had stayed (with the Bucks). It was just a matter of learning a new man's style."

James Fitzgerald owned the Bucks until 1985, when he sold his interest to Kohl. In addition to basketball, Fitzgerald, a graduate of Notre Dame, had interests in cable television, petroleum distribution, and in banking and communications. These served as interests until the opportunity arrived for Fitzgerald to re-enter the game in 1986, this time with the beleaguered Golden State Warriors. Franklin Mieuli, the former owner, had lost interest in running the team as a major contender in the league and Fitzgerald bailed the team out. Nelson became available to join forces with Fitzgerald again after he resigned from the Bucks' organization last May.

Nelson couldn't get off too freely, though. In the contract he inked with the Bucks, there was a clause which stated that Nelson wouldn't be allowed to be either the General Manager or coach of another team for two seasons if he wasn't with the Bucks. The Warriors attempted to circumvent this initially by naming Nelson Vice President, but the NBA stepped in to pressure the teams to reach a settlement. The agreement reached on December 30th sent the Warriors' second round draft choice to Milwaukee along with a formal apology from Nelson, in return for which he returns to active duty in the basketball decision-making of the Warriors.

The Warriors themselves, it should be recalled, were an exciting team last season under George Karl. Karl is a



Don Nelson: Returns to the Floor

familiar figure to Celtics fans, because the 37-year old coach directed the Cleveland Cavaliers in a memorable (if brief) playoff series against Boston in 1985. Boston won 3-1, but each game was close and hard-fought. Karl took the Warriors into the playoffs last season, in his first year as coach of the club, and Golden State defeated Utah in the first round of the postseason, before falling to the Lakers, 4-1. They courageously avoided a sweep by rallying from fifteen points down to upend the Lakers in Game Four of that series.

The plot thickens, because rather than build on a nucleus that reached the playoffs, the Warriors began a major restructuring job this season. Purvis Short was left unsigned in the free agent market and was subsequently let go to the Rockets. Eric Floyd and Joe Barry Carroll were also bartered in exchange for the enigmatic Ralph Sampson. Lester Conner, who played a more subordinate role, was also let go. The immediate results were disastrous. Sampson, although considerably more relaxed with the Warriors, still is a question mark, and was sidelined for the rest of the year after arthroscopic surgery last month. Chris Mullin suffered through alcohol rehab and Chris Washburn, the third choice in the 1986 draft, was traded away. Essentially, the entire George Karl team had vanished, the team was losing (17-55 and eliminated from the playoffs April 8) and according to reports, Karl, after

"I'm not surprised Nellie returned to coaching, but I am surprised he came back this quickly. I think Nellie is the best coach in the league. He's an innovator: he invented the point forward, for example, and made Paul Pressey into a near-All-Star. His defensive concepts are mirrored throughout the NBA. Did Nellie force George out? Publicly, it's been written that Nellie supported George's request for an extension, but you have to look closely at the Fitzgerald-Nelson relationship. What they do and have done in the past, is play 'good guy-bad guy' with each other. That is, one time one of them will do something and the other will take the blame in the press. This might be a case where Jim is wearing the black hat because it looks better all around."

Last week in the press conference announcing his return to coaching, Nelson stated, "I'm really excited about this team. It just seems to be the right thing to do. The ownership wants me to do it. I know in my heart I'm an excellent basketball coach. I know my systems are good. I know my relationships with players, media and fans are good. When I put a list of coaches down, I was among them." Reportedly Nelson offered the job to Jeff Mullins of North Carolina-Charlotte and John Thompson of Georgetown at last week's NCAA Final Four and was turned down.

The details are complex. "Only George Karl, Jim Fitzgerald, Don Nelson and (Warriors President) Daniel Finnane will know the facts," remarked the source. When Karl was in Boston with the Warriors in January, he was asked about his relationship with Nelson, who had hired Karl as an advance scout for the Bucks after Karl was fired by Cleveland in 1986. "Nellie's great," Karl said at the time. "I'm getting along great with him." A front office person in the Warriors' office was told of Karl's answer to that question, and replied, "That was January, and now it's April."

Nelson will take over the coaching position effective next fall.

asking for an extension of his contract, was denied. Citing health reasons among other things, Karl resigned and left the door open for Nelson to return.

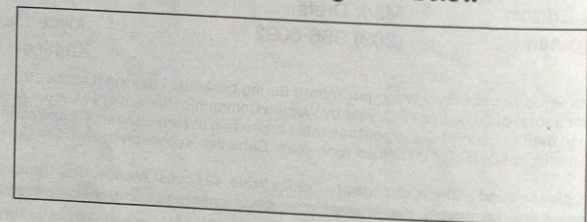
A source close to Nelson commented,

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Due to an increase in both printing prices and postage rates, the annual subscription rate to *Boston Celtics Pride* will rise to \$30.00, effective July 15, 1988. (Newsstand rates will rise to \$3.00 per issue.) Subscribers currently on our mailing list who would like to add another year to their existing subscriptions at the current \$24.00 rate are welcome to do so, by attaching their mailing label (found on the front cover) to the coupon below and returning to us postmarked no later than July 15, 1988. Checks and money orders are to be made out to *Celtics Pride* and enclosed with this coupon in the amount of \$24.00.

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ASK RED

By Red Auerbach

EDITORS NOTE: "Ask Red Auerbach" is a regular feature of *Celtics Pride*. If you have a question for Red, please send it to *Celtics Pride*, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840. Red will answer as many as possible in each issue.

QUESTION: Do the players have to wear team uniform jackets and ties to home and away games?

Denise Sternberg, Sacramento, CA

RED'S ANSWER: No, we don't issue them a specific outfit to wear on the road or on their drives into and away from the home games. Our players are much too professional both on and off the court for us to question their judgment to the extent that we would actually dress them. However, their contracts and our team rules do require some basic guidelines in dress and appearance, a sort of minimum standard for their dress. That standard includes the wearing of long- or short-sleeved dress, sport or turtleneck shirts (no T-shirts or sweat shirts), slacks (no shorts or cut-offs) and shoes and socks (no sneakers, gym shoes or sandals). We have never had a problem on the Celtics; I like to believe that our players understand that they present by their very appearance an example to millions of people and that they will dress and act accordingly. I've never been disappointed by this group of guys in that regard.

QUESTION: Is ankle taping mandatory for the Celtics players?

Robert A. Fitzgerald, Northport, FL

RED'S ANSWER: Generally, yes. Our rule is that players must be properly taped for all practices, scrimmages, games, clinics, etc. This applies from the first day of training camp through the last playoff game. The reasons for this rule are, I'm sure, obvious. All evidence has proven that taping both helps to prevent ankle and related injuries. On occasion, when K.C. feels that the guys could use a rest, he'll call a "no tape" practice, where the team will view some videotape or run through some plays without any actual contact. And at other times, the first team won't tape, but Chris Ford will have the Green Team playing three-on-three with tape.

QUESTION: How often are the nets changed?

Don Ford, Orlando, FL

RED'S ANSWER: That's simple. They're changed as often as they have to be. To get a better idea, though, I contacted Dennis Grabowski, who heads up the maintenance department at the Boston Garden. Dennis estimates that the nets are changed every five games or so.

QUESTION: How does the team travel, by bus, plane or train? Do they fly into a city on the day of a game or the day before, and do they return to Boston at night after the game? Do the Celtics have their own plane?

Jon Jennings, Martinsville, IN

RED'S ANSWER: First of all, Jon, we rarely travel by bus these days and never at all by train. In the olden days, when a guy named Auerbach was the coach of the team and the league was young, we would make many a road trip using busses and/or trains, but now just about every trip is a plane flight. Not only that, but whenever possible, the players and coaches get to fly first class. Some other specific accommodations for the players and coaches on the road include porters to handle their baggage, staying only at first-class hotels and making extra-long beds available to them. As for the policy governing team travel to road games, here are the rules that apply. First, if a team plays games on

QUESTION: When the Celtics are on the road, who rooms with who?

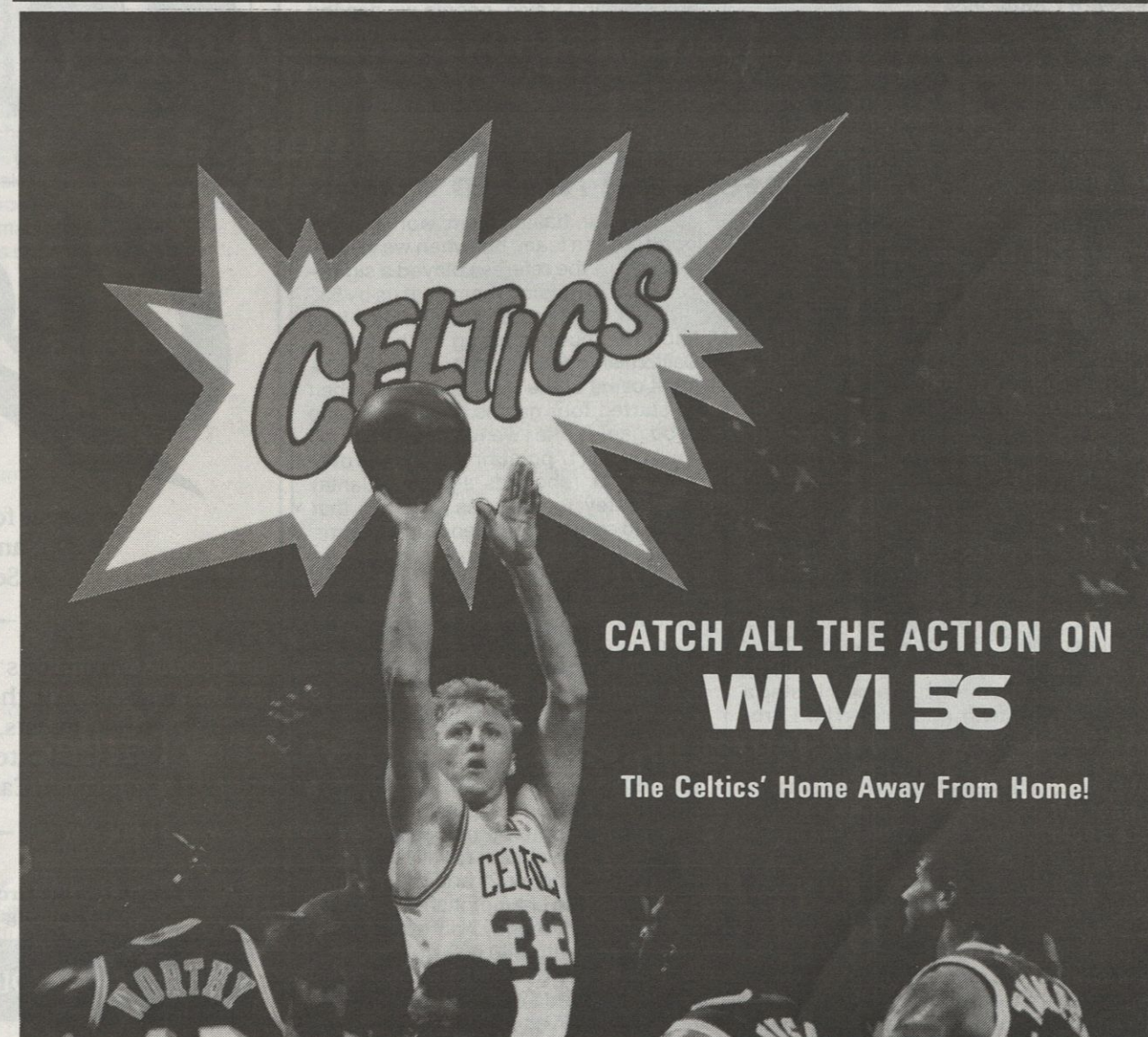
Seresa Testa, Indio, Calif.

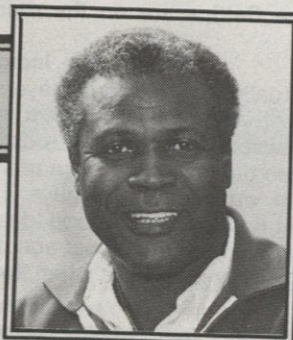
RED'S ANSWER: Actually, the modern players each get their own rooms, although they do have to pay the difference in cost between half a double room and a single one. In the olden days, back when a redheaded guy named Auerbach was coaching, guys used to share rooms. I thought it was a pretty good idea at the time and I really still do. Now, though, just about everyone in the league stays in single rooms when traveling.

QUESTION: Players always seem to play better when they come to the Celtics. Besides getting quality minutes for the team, which results in victories and banners, does this also result in improved stats over their stats with other teams?

Mark Byrd, R.A.F.B., Ga.

RED'S ANSWER: I'll agree that there is a long list of players who have come to the Celtics and raised their games to new heights. Some came early in their careers, more came late. Don Nelson, Willie Naulls, Emmette Bryant, Wayne Embry, Bailey Howell, Hank Finkel, Paul Silas, Charlie Scott, Nate Archibald, Rick Robey, Chris Ford, M.L. Carr, Scott Wedman, Bill Walton, Dennis Johnson, Robert Parish—all of these, and I'm sure many more whose names I'm unfortunately forgetting, came to the Celtics and earned championship rings with us. In general, though, it has not been their individual statistics that improved when they came to Boston, but their overall play, their sense of fitting into our team concept. Remember—the Boston Celtics have never had a player win the league's scoring championship while on our team. It may sound funny, but I'm proud of that, because it is testimony to a long list of guys who have sacrificed personal goals, and individual glory, for the good of the team. Most of these guys had better statistical seasons with other teams, but most of them had to wait until they got to Boston before winning that elusive ring. There's no mystical secret here, just an understanding that the ultimate accomplishment—a championship—is to be won by a team, not a bunch of individuals.





COACH'S CORNER

By K.C. Jones

Comeback

A couple of stories have captured the imagination of the greater Boston sports audience in recent weeks. Fortunately for our ballclub, they have been stories of victory, rather than defeat. Of recovery, not pessimism.

We have been playing better basketball recently and hopefully we are on the right track as we approach the NBA Playoffs, beginning the week of April 25th. It's been a season of peaks and valleys; we began the season by winning our initial six contests (twelve, counting the final six of the pre-season); but then a siege of injuries hit us in December. When Kevin McHale returned to the team at the end of November, we were forced back to the drawing board. In Kevin's absence, we shot more from the perimeter and we needed to take advantage of his great talent once again. We practiced every day for three weeks in December; despite some discouraging losses, we moved ahead of our opponents in the Eastern Conference.

My chief concerns as coach were aggressiveness and attentiveness on defense, rebounding and turnovers. We struggled until we reached our low point of the year in a homecourt (117-107)

defeat to the Nets March 2nd. We have had tough times in the past in my five years as coach of the team. We redesigned the offense after Philadelphia won here in February in 1984 and we went to the West Coast and regrouped. There was the siege of injuries in the 1985 playoffs, the Christmas Massacre in 1985, when the Knicks rallied to defeat us in Madison Square Garden after we led them by 28 points. Each instance saw a recovery.

I think you have to approach problem areas with a couple of thoughts in mind. In tough times, I call very few meetings designed to iron out a problem. Fingers are pointed and the problem accelerates. My strategy is to attack the difficulty at the fundamental level: where are weaknesses on the floor? Let's practice, work on the difficulties, play better and get on with the business of winning ballgames. Everybody responds to adversity a different way. I become angry and more determined.

We have played better since early March (better ball movement, more aggressiveness defensively), but as a coach, you have to always be watching for lapses. One such lapse came when we were caught napping against the 76ers last week in Boston. We were outstanding in the first half against them, shooting 65% from the outside, and working the ball inside for the best shot. They were the opposite. In the second half, we were missing everything — especially misses by Larry and Kevin, people we depend on for scoring. Then, each guy alone felt he had to get us back on the track, and everyone on our team missed wide-open shots. It was a crushing defeat on the surface.

Celtics Will Represent the NBA in Spain

The Boston Celtics will represent the National Basketball Association in the second annual McDonald's Open Basketball Tournament in Spain in mid-October this year, as announced by the commissioner, David Stern, last week. "We are honored to have the NBA represented by one of the most historical franchises in all of sports," Stern said.

The team will play one year after the Milwaukee Bucks won the inaugural event, defeating Italy and the Soviet Union in Milwaukee last year. For one of the Celtics, Mark Acres, it will be a reunion of sorts. Acres played in the European League last season.

"Oh, I think we'll do extremely well," claimed the 6'10" rookie forward. "Their teams play very mechanically and they just don't have the inside power to stop a player like Kevin (McHale). The European teams usually have a center and a power forward, and they'll take a lot of their shots. But their game isn't smooth or quick; with our team, there's a threat at every position. We should dominate, no problem."

"Our only concern, and it might be a real concern, will possibly be the referees. Sometimes they can do funny things. In the European Tournament, home court is decided by a point differential. That is, if you beat a team by a large point margin, that's a factor if the teams split. One

season our Italian team won by fifty points over a team, but when we went to their court the referees played a significant part in helping them beat us by 53." Acres' rookie season has had its highs and lows, but according to the affable Californian, a turning point for his development came at the mid-year mark, when he started four games. "I played some good games after we returned from the West Coast (17 points in a close win over Indiana, 11 rebounds against Atlanta) but the key for me was knowing that K.C. had enough confidence in my game to start me."

Acres' wife, Veronique Acres, is originally from Belgium; she has had some difficulties adjusting to the States, but according to the player, she is better now. "We had two long road trips (to the West Coast), so for a while she felt out of place. But now she's enjoying Boston and feeling more at home."

The Celtics will be joined in October of 1988 by team Real Madrid, the champion of the Italian League and another European team to be named at a later date. Two doubleheaders will be played, the first on October 21 and the winners will play for the championship on October 23rd. Prize money (US dollars) will be awarded with \$40,000 going to the winner, \$30,000 going to the runners-up, and \$25,000 and \$20,000 to the third and fourth place finishers respectively.

How do you recover? Again, it's technique and it's resilience. If you're missing wide-open shots, then you're at least setting things up correctly. I'd rather lose that way than see us forcing the ball inside and failing. To me, that's a danger sign from a broader perspective. To me, that means everything you've been working on in practice hasn't been absorbed (we weren't working). There's nothing you can do about it. You go on and play the next game. The results have been very good: we defeated Houston, Detroit and Dallas, and as I stated above, we did it with good ball movement and aggressive defense. I like the way we've responded to the challenge. I respect the way we've stayed with our goal.

We've practiced during the past month with Bill Walton, whose return to the team has helped. We have tried to move slowly

with Bill. We've preferred to let him play his way back into condition at his own pace, with no unreasonable expectations on either the team's or Bill's part. I'm glad to say that he looks better and better, and as of this writing, we're waiting to hear something from him about when he will return.

I have a tremendous amount of respect for Bill. His desire and competitiveness have impressed me since the first training camp he played with us in 1985 — shouting encouragement to teammates during scrimmages, lending professionalism to our effort as a basketball team every night, especially on the road.

I have tried to avoid predictions concerning his return. Asked nearly daily by the media about when he will come back, I have repeatedly deflected the questions. When he says he can return, we'll consider it. After answering those questions about Bill, I prefer to talk about the team and how we're doing at the present time. Then, I'm asked once again about Bill. It's part of the job on both ends — the press has to ask these questions and I have to try to deal with the team as it is on the floor every day.

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GOOD FOOD, GOOD TIMES, GOOD SPORTS

NOTES AND QUOTES

By Jim Rucidlo

"Detroit's found out they can get away with bullying and muscling. We emphasized before the game that they're going to push, pull and grab you by the shirt. If you don't match it, you're going to lose."

— K.C. Jones

The Celtics are the best NBA team in tight games, sporting an 8-2 record in games decided by three points or less. On the other hand, the Sixers are the worst in this category, compiling a 1-10 record in such games, while Detroit is 4-4 and the Lakers are 8-6.

Although many fans believe the high-flying Lakers run away with more games than any other team, both Detroit (28) and Boston (28) have won more games than Los Angeles (26) decided by 10 or more points.

Akeem Olajuwon rates the centers: "I think Mark Eaton is the toughest match-up for me defensively, because he blocks so many shots. Moses (Malone) and Patrick (Ewing) are the toughest for me to guard. Ewing especially, because he plays both ends of the floor."

With four home games remaining, the Celtics and the Lakers possess the best home records at 32-5. However, one of the Celtics losses came at Hartford, which is closer to New York City than it is to Boston.

Los Angeles, 23-12, and Boston, 20-16, are the only two NBA teams which can boast winning road records so far this year. The Celtics need to win one of their remaining five road games to notch a better road record than last season, when they went 20-21.

Everybody's talking about DJ:

Mavericks coach John MacLeod — "When DJ has his rhythm, like he did today, he's tough — he can flat out stick it. If DJ is hitting the jump shot, it ties up your defense all the more, and he becomes another weapon in the Celtics' arsenal."

Mark Aguirre — "DJ doesn't shoot that well. He's an excellent shooter, but he doesn't shoot THAT well (9-11 FG). Even after the display he put on today, I would go to his house and bet him he couldn't shoot that well again. We thought DJ was the man (to leave open), but he proved today he isn't and he can still play. I don't like to say that I think any team is unbeatable, but the Celtics are a much better team when DJ is hitting his shots."

Bulls' coach Doug Collins — "Against the Celtics you have to take chances, because you have to double down on McHale — you can't guard him straight up and that's going to leave someone open. You have to watch Ainge, because of the three-point shot, so that means you have to take your chances with DJ. If DJ is hitting his shot, the Celtics are virtually unbeatable."

Pistons coach Chuck Daly — "We took a calculated risk on DJ, giving him the open shot, and tonight he made it — that was the difference in the final score. You have to double down against the Celtics, but tonight DJ made the shots."

Larry Bird — "It's hard to beat us if Dennis is hitting his shots."

How the Celtics compare against this season's highs and lows:
Longest winning streak — (15) Los Angeles Lakers, December 11 through January 12
Celtics — (7)

Longest losing streak — (11) New Jersey Nets, November 21 through December 12
(11) L. A. Clippers, December 19 through January 11

Celtics — (3)

Most points, game — (156) Denver vs. San Antonio, November 20
Celtics (143) vs. Detroit, January 13

Fewest points, game — (71) Detroit at Atlanta, January 5
Celtics (85)

Most points, player — Michael Jordan (59)

Celtics — Larry Bird (49)

Most rebounds, game — Mark Eaton (25)

Celtics — Larry Bird (20)

Most assists, game — John Stockton (21)

Celtics — Dennis Johnson (17)

Most blocked shots, game — Larry Nance (10), Manute Bol (100),
Benoit Benjamin (10)

Celtics — Brad Lohaus (5)

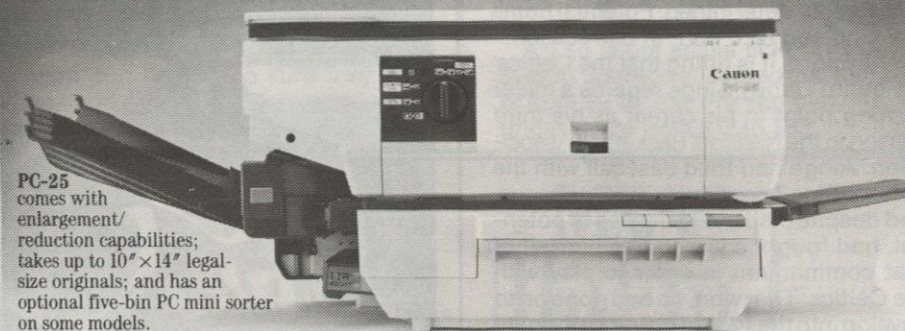
Most steals, game — Michael Jordan (10)

Celtics — Dirk Minniefield (6)

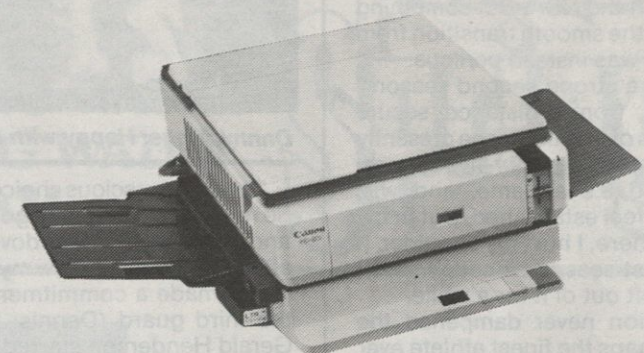
Mark Aguirre explains the Celtics success: "The Celtics' spacing on the court is incredible. It's unbelievable how many players they have who can play more than one position. It's not only that the Celtics are great individual players, but they are the prime players in their positions. Kevin McHale is the NBA's prime post-up player, Danny Ainge is quickly becoming one of the league's prime number two guards, and Larry Bird is Larry Bird. The Celtics system allows each of these players to do what they do best, and that's nothing but a credit to their coaching staff."

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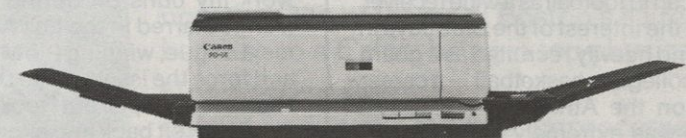
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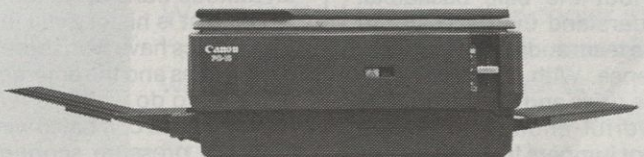
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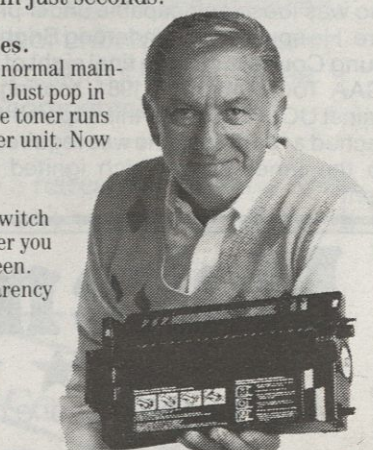
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By Bob Schron

This is the era of the superathlete. Aided by superior technologies, supported financially so they are able to train year-long, the athlete of the eighties has never run faster, jumped higher, performed more gracefully or efficiently. Bo Jackson, for instance, the 1985 Heisman Trophy winner in college football, is able to play major league baseball (with the Kansas City Royals) and football (for the Los Angeles Raiders) with equal, stunning ability. He is the modern superathlete refined to his peak: muscular, blurringly fast, deeply determined. Potential home run king and NFL MVP in one season.

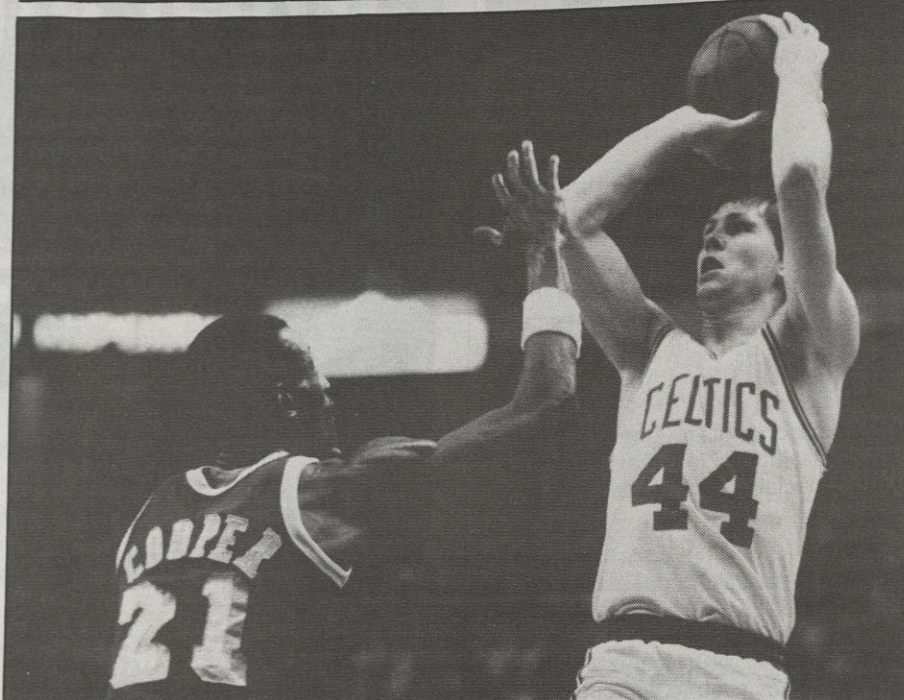
Therefore, it is fitting that the Celtics' off-guard Danny Ainge regards a major turning point in his career as his third season in the National Basketball Association. Ainge had tried baseball with the Toronto Blue Jays of the American League, and despite displaying flashes of potential, had fought a war to free himself of that commitment in order to play with the Celtics. That won, he had gone on to develop into the type of player he thought he could be in the NBA. But something happened — the smooth transition from rookie to pro was instead perilous.

"I had had a strong second season," he says now, from a distance, secure with the status of the All-Star he presently is. "I had started seventy-five games, had averaged 9.9 a game, and was beginning to feel established. But in my third season here, I hurt my shoulder. It was K.C.'s first season as coach, and I sort of was left out of it for a while."

This situation never dampened the spirits of perhaps the finest athlete ever to come out of Oregon. High School All-American in football as a wide receiver, attracting the interest of the Blue Jays in baseball and heavily recruited as a guard for major collegiate basketball — a career modeled on the Athlete in a classical sense. He was extremely quick, tough, competitive, gifted physically. The basketball skills were obvious: the instincts to move without the ball, basketball smarts to understand the necessity to sacrifice for the team and to play position, textbook defense. With the ball, Ainge was fast on the drive and a great outside shooter, powerful enough to launch twenty-five foot jumpers from the standing position and able to get into the air to outjump defenders. This was a player who was loose and capable under pressure. He spurred the underdog Brigham Young Cougars into the final eight of the NCAA Tournament in 1981, scoring 37 against UCLA. So when this superathlete reached a roadblock, he was required to tap the inner drive which ignited his talent.

Danny Keeps Them Honest

"Long Range" Ainge



Danny Ainge: Happy with His Role

"It was a conscious choice on my part," he reflected. "I set some goals for myself and got on with it. I was down for a while, although I couldn't allow myself to wallow in it. I made a commitment to become the third guard (Dennis Johnson and Gerald Henderson started that season) who had a role. I decided that I would work my buns off during the summer (Ainge starred in the Los Angeles Summer League, winning the MVP that year) and force the issue. Make them play me. I had a rough spell but I took this attitude: 'I couldn't sit back and expect it to come easy for me any more. I had to do something about it.' It was something of an attitude transformation!"

The rest is history still in the making. The Celtics have won three NBA titles in the eighties and the emergence of Ainge has a lot to do with this team's style as they head into combat to win title number four. His pressure scoring helped win the Seventh Game (111-102) over the Lakers in 1984, and today, his end-to-end game, including the plethora of three-point field goals, have helped keep the Celtics in the hunt. The Celtics never let down. They hustle. This too, is Danny Ainge's game. It took a while for fans, media and professionals to catch on, but now Ainge is a Boston Garden favorite. Red Auerbach was an early

supporter, as was former *Boston Herald* writer and close friend Mike Carey. Questions to Danny Ainge no longer begin with an "If." They begin with "How" and "Why." Ainge is asked to comment on a Dennis Johnson observation, that the time Danny began playing like an All-Star was the time he finally believed in his ability to play. Because his Celtics peers always did.

"I think I've always had confidence, and that came from knowing that I had the green light from K.C. to play my game. I think I've understood all along that I could be a positive force for the team and the organization. I always thought K.C. gave me the freedom to play the game the way I think it should be played (as it fits my abilities). I just go out and have fun — play pressure defense the whole game. If the defense sags and I can nail the three-pointer, I enjoy that, too. And the more up-tempo it is, the more fun it is. When we play Denver . . . I could play all day. Defensively there's more of a challenge because we're doing less doubling up on the ball, so we don't get into rotations that leave guys open for jumpers. I need to work harder on containing my man better in a one-on-one situation, and this is important when the playoffs start. The intensity level is so much higher, you just can't have any lapses . . . you study your opponents (more) and the penetrating guard is usually my man. If I stop him, it can disrupt their offense."

"There's criticism about shooting too many three-pointers, but I think it's a huge weapon. I've taken my share of bad shots, but who doesn't in this league from time to time? I think that shot has won many more games for us this season than it's cost us. Teams are now reluctant to leave me out on the perimeter and this totally opens up our inside game. Defenders have to adjust two steps to cover me up on the outside and our whole offense has improved. First, because Kevin and Robert are such great scorers they have more uncontested shots. Look at players like Akeem Olajuwon and Moses Malone; they're great scorers but

they aren't ever able to move without having to deal with a double-team. That's the other advantage because Kevin and Robert are such great passers, too. We are getting open shots on the perimeter because Kevin and Robert are making the 'right' pass on the inside-out play. And passes to cutters . . . it is a useful weapon. When we've been on the fast break, I've actually heard coaches shouting for their guys to cover me up on the wing. Teams are very conscious of a three-point shot in a transition game! We'll get layups if they're that concerned."

The 29-year-old Ainge has ascended to new highs during the past two seasons. His scoring climbed from 10.7 to 14.8 ppg last year, to 15.6 in 1987-88. He has played 2,659 minutes this season, already a career high. His present scoring average matches his career high in the NBA, fittingly; his 15.6 ppg mark came in the 1985-86 playoffs, where he is a tested, trusted performer.

Ainge endured a battle in court to depart from the Jays to play with the Celtics, but the effort has created a story with a happy ending. "I'm very happy with my role on the team. I feel I'm a very critical part of a great basketball team, but if the game were four-on-four, I'd sit. That's OK, because everyone is equally important to the outcome. Every guy we have is crucial to the success of the team. No guy is greater than the team itself."

Red-Letter Dates for Danny

May 22, 1981: Celtics President Red Auerbach calls Ainge at his apartment in Toronto and asks if Ainge is interested in pro basketball. Ainge says he is flattered but plans to remain with the Jays.

June 9, 1981: The Celtics select Ainge on the second round of the NBA draft, 31st pick overall. It is their third pick of the draft. "Let's go for the home run," owner Harry Mangurian says. "Take Ainge. If things don't work out, I'll take the brunt of the criticism for making the decision."

June 11, 1981: Ainge calls Auerbach and tells him he wants to play basketball and says the Blue Jays will release him from his contract. Toronto later changes its mind and demands payment from the Celtics. Boston refuses to meet the Blue Jays' demands.

Sept. 8, 1981: The Blue Jays file suit in New York City seeking to bar Celtics from interfering with Ainge's contract. Celtics file countersuit in Boston charging Blue Jays with restraint of trade.

Sept. 19, 1981: A U.S. District Court in New York takes jurisdiction of both suits and the trial begins. Sept. 25, 1981: The trial ends with a verdict in favor of Toronto. Blue Jays official Peter Bavasi lights up a victory cigar and rips the Celtics for having "disrespect for the sanctity of a contract."

Nov. 27, 1981: The Celtics and Blue Jays work out a settlement. Ainge agrees to terms on a five-year deal worth \$1.85 million with the Celtics.

Dec. 9, 1981: Ainge is activated and appears in his first pro game against New Jersey. He goes 1 for 4 from the field in 10 minutes, scoring two points.

April 1, 1982: Makes his first pro start. He plays 26 minutes, shoots 5 for 13 from the field, and has three steals and 10 points against the Knicks.

April 24, 1983: Gets into a scuffle with Tree Rollins of Atlanta and has his finger bitten by the Atlanta center.

Oct. 15, 1984: Gerald Henderson traded to Seattle. Ainge moves into Celtics starting lineup.

March 12, 1985: Has 12 assists against Atlanta on the night Larry Bird scores 60 in New Orleans.

Jan. 14, 1987: Collects 11 rebounds against Dallas, a career high.

Feb. 7, 1987: Summoned as a last-minute replacement for Trent Tucker and finishes fourth in the Long Distance shootout during All-Star weekend.

March 8, 1987: Has a career-high 35 points against the Pistons in the Silverdome.

March 27, 1987: Has a career-high 15 assists against the Bulls.

May 6, 1987: Has a playoff career-high 40 points against the Bucks.

Jan. 27, 1988: Selected by the Eastern Conference coaches as a reserve for the All-Star Game.

Feb. 6, 1988: Participates in the Long Distance Shootout during All-Star weekend.

Clumsy Fakes

Counterfeit Tickets Surface in Boston

The unprecedented desirability of Celtics tickets during the Bird Era reached into another area of jurisdiction recently with the disclosure that there had been a series of counterfeit tickets passing hands in the last six weeks. According to Duane Johnson, the Celtics Director of Sales, the problem had a beginning and, fortunately, an end: the only games affected are the final nine games of the regular season. Those are the games printed on the third page of the package sent to each season ticket holder through the mail.

"We found out about the problem recently," commented Johnson from his office last week. "What happened was cardboard of the same stock of paper we use to print the tickets was found, apparently by some kids in a landfill outside of Boston. The tickets aren't valid — they don't have either the section or the ticket location printed on them. But they do have the same markings as our original. The only thing I can report is that it is really a case where the buyer of tickets has to be sure to look at the tickets carefully. They might not be valid."

But they have the same markings as our original. The only thing I can report is that it is really a case where the buyer has to be sure to look at the tickets carefully. They might not be valid . . ."

The counterfeit ticket problem developed when the ticket blanks that are printed as a test run were accidentally discovered. "Like a buried treasure," Johnson said, "when left in the wrong hands."

According to Johnson, who has been with the team for eleven years, the

demand for tickets continues to accelerate with each season. "You can tell by how quickly the tickets sold out this year. Formerly, people could buy obstructed view tickets in December, to give them away at Christmas. But this season everything was sold out by the end of November."

The waiting list for season tickets — 3,500 names — continues to grow. "I don't foresee any change in that at all. We still take names, but I can't in good conscience make promises. Last season, we had only two people give up their

tickets; the previous season there were four. People no longer just give them up. They pass them on to either relatives or friends and they do this by writing a notarized letter informing us they are changing the name on the tickets."

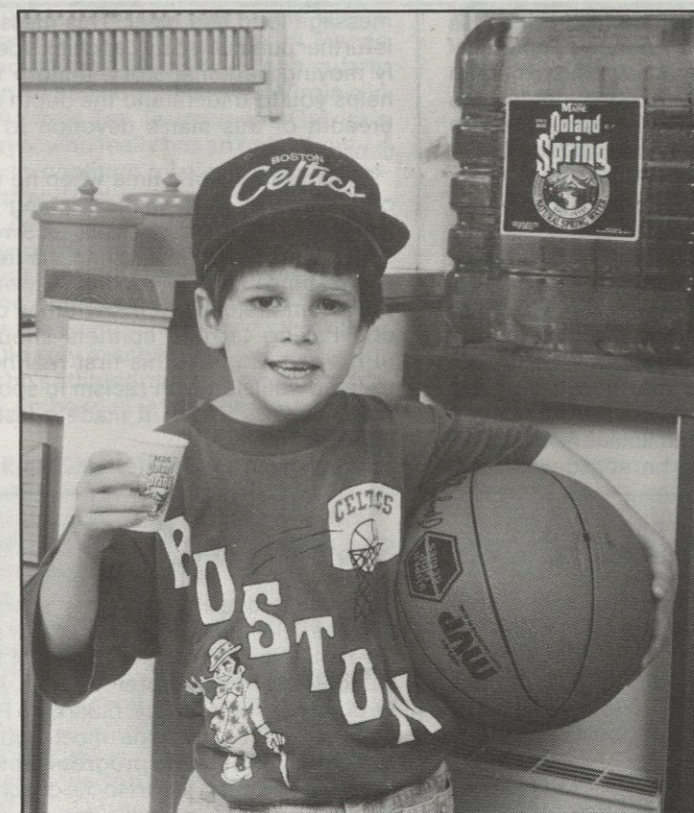
Johnson doesn't foresee the demand changing "until Larry Bird retires or until we build a new arena, so that the seating capacity will become greater. Ticket agencies formerly were a source for buyers, but I'm not so sure they even have them any more. They usually have long-time customers, just as we do. I

don't think you can call a ticket agency such as Out-Of-Town Tickets (in Cambridge) and get tickets. I suspect they're all sold out.

"In a way there may be a hidden benefit to the counterfeit problem," Johnson pointed out. "With the added attention the tickets are getting, hopefully the scalpers will have a harder time doing business on the street. A lot of times those tickets (i.e. from scalpers) are stolen anyway. Now maybe people will think twice about buying tickets from sources they can't totally depend on."

Asked about actual ticket prices this season, Johnson answered that the range is from \$9 to \$28. For the playoffs, the prices range from \$12 to \$33.

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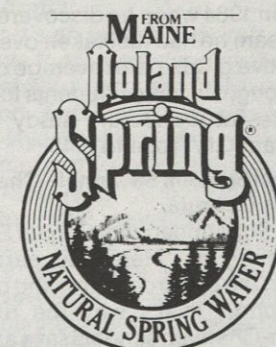


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Richard Lapchick and CSSS Campaign for STUDENT-Athletes

Giant Steps

By Jan Wrotnowski

Larry Bird, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan are four of the very few lucky ones. They beat the odds, odds of about 10,000 to 1 against making it to the pros. They know the facts. And they care enough about other aspiring athletes to tell them the truth. That's why these members of basketball's elite have come together on the same team. That team is the Center for the Study of Sport in Society, a team for which they serve as "Distinguished Advisors."

But why lend their names and helping hands to this particular organization? And what is the Center for the Study of Sport in Society (CSSS for short) anyway?

CSSS is the first university-based program concerned with the issues of academics and athletics. And you know that, unfortunately, many young athletes are so lured by their pro sports dreams that they end up paying little or no attention to their academic progress. CSSS reports: "While 1.5 million youngsters play high school football and basketball each year, less than 200 annually make it to the pros. The greatest tragedy lies in the fact that a full 25 to 30 percent of all high school football and basketball players are functionally illiterate — more than double that of high school students overall. Only 1 in 100 high school players play in college. Only 30 percent of those who get to the college level graduate."

"What happens to the rest?"

That's a question many of us don't care to think much about. We'd rather just enjoy the on-court action of the Celtics or the NCAA contenders. But at least CSSS remains aware of this continual skewing of priorities.

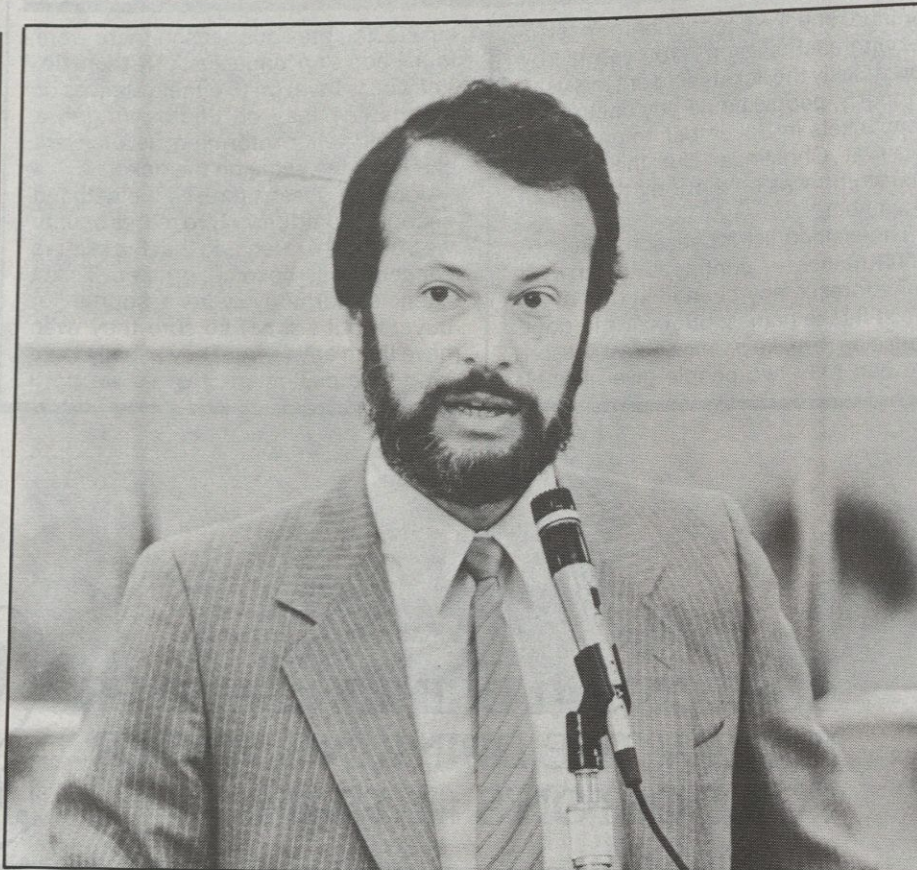
And CSSS isn't just talking about the issues, they're doing something about them. With their University Degree Completion Program, CSSS has designed a plan to help current or former pros, Olympians and amateur athletes obtain their college degrees, so as to better prepare themselves for life after sports. Academic and career counseling are a big part of the program. To implement all this, CSSS has agreements with the Leagues and Players' Associations of the NHL, the NBA and the NFL.

With the help of those athletes enrolled in the University Degree Completion Program, CSSS has put together a Schools Outreach Program. Athletes make personal visits to junior, middle and high schools, counselling students about the importance of always balancing athletics and academics in their lives.

Also, the Center serves as a clearing-house for resources dealing with the various aspects of sports and social issues, providing printed materials as well as a speakers bureau.

Northeastern University in Boston is the headquarters for the Center for the Study of Sport in Society. But it is only one of a 25-member National University Consortium for Sport in Society.

CSSS is ably directed by a quietly passionate, unquestionably dedicated man. Dr. Richard Lapchick is the heart and soul of the Center. A former college-level teacher of political science and staff member of the United Nations Centre



Dr. Lapchick is the Heart of the program.

Against Apartheid, Lapchick brings his long years of experience in political activism and the championing of human rights to his present cause: ending the exploitation of student-athletes. He's the son of legendary basketball player and coach (of the Knicks and St. John's), Joe Lapchick. Through his own work, Rickard Lapchick now builds on his father's legacy of actively caring about athletes' lives on and off the playing fields.

Dr. Lapchick's strength is in his gentleness. He presents a tranquil exterior, but this is an exterior that belies the fiery spirit within. For this is a man of deep convictions and commitment. And through his quiet manner, he still delivers his

message loud and clear. This message is further punctuated by Lapchick's deeply moving personal story, a story that helps you to understand the depth and breadth of this man's devotion to his cause.

Lapchick tells of a time when he was only five. His dad was coaching the Knicks and their first black player, Sweetwater Clifton, had just joined the team. At that time Lapchick recalls answering their home telephone many times over and having terrible epithets shouted in his ear. This was his first real head-to-head collision with racism in sports. And needless to say, it made a lasting impression.

Much later in his life, Dr. Lapchick

experienced a horrible example of racism in sports at work. It was the night of February 14, 1978. He was teaching political science at Virginia Wesleyan University in Norfolk. At the same time, he also was serving as National Chairman of the American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sport and Society (ACCESS), a coalition of national organizations working for equality in sports, focusing on South Africa. Lapchick had been leading protest against the South African Davis Cup tennis matches then being held in Nashville. And what happened proved that someone didn't like what Dr. Lapchick had been doing.

That evening Richard Lapchick was working late in his campus office. Suddenly two men burst in, tied him to his chair, and brutally beat him with file-cabinet drawers and a sculpture.

Lapchick lost consciousness, but later awoke to find the misspelled racial slur "niger" carved into his abdomen. This is a horror that no-one could ever forget. The retelling remains painful to this day.

After the attack, continuing death threats drove him and his family out of Virginia. The violence continued while he worked with the United Nations. Then Lapchick finally reached a point where he was able to start to come to terms with the terror he had experienced.

By writing his book *Broken Promises: Racism in American Sports* in 1980, Lapchick began to make some sense of what had happened to him personally and to understand how it fit into the larger picture of racism in sports. The writing proved to be therapeutic and fortuitous for him, for it brought Lapchick and his work to the attention of Richard Astro, Dean of Northeastern's College of Arts and Sciences. Their coming together eventually led to the creation of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society, providing Richard Lapchick with a place where he could put his knowledge and pain to work to serve the larger cause.

For the first three years of the Center's operation, Dr. Lapchick was skillfully assisted by former Associate Director and Celtics' great, Tom (Satch) Sanders. Sanders is now carrying on the work he began at CSSS, in his role as Director for Player Programs with the NBA. Satch provides one-on-one academic and career counseling, and runs the NBA Rookie Transition Program, assisting athletes in their adjustment to life in the pros.

April 5th was a very important day for Dr. Lapchick and the Center, for on that day, with the cooperation of the University Consortium, and with the endorsement of the pro players' associations and the leagues, United Press International, and Houghton Mifflin Company, CSSS inaugurated its first annual National STUDENT-Athlete Day. Nationally, locally and within universities, events were scheduled with the intention of making us all more aware of the problems of athletics in education. And Dr. Lapchick and his colleagues hope that these efforts will open up dialogue on the issues. With awareness and knowledge will come a greater understanding of the problems at hand. And isn't it about time we stopped playing games with America's future, and got our priorities straight?

Giant Steps Awards

Northeastern's Center for the Study of Sport in Society gave its Giant Steps Awards to a civic leader, a parent, a coach, a high school and a school system — the components of an average athlete's academic support system.

The Civic Leader: H. Ross Perot

The Texas millionaire entrepreneur pushed no pass/no play in his home state in 1985. The rule requires high school students to pass all courses to stay eligible for sports.

The Parent: Lonise Bias

The mother of Maryland basketball player Len Bias, who died after taking cocaine in a school dorm, delivers a central message when she speaks at schools across the USA: "Len... will not have died in vain if his example prevents one of you from using drugs."

The Coach

The basketball coach at Boston's Umana Technical High School doesn't settle

for student-athletes — he wants "scholar-athletes." Hamilton visits each player and his family in their home. His team has mandatory after-school study halls. And he created the Academic Guardian Program, in which "guardians" meet regularly with players, receive progress reports from teachers, and report to the coaches.

The School: Miami's Killian High

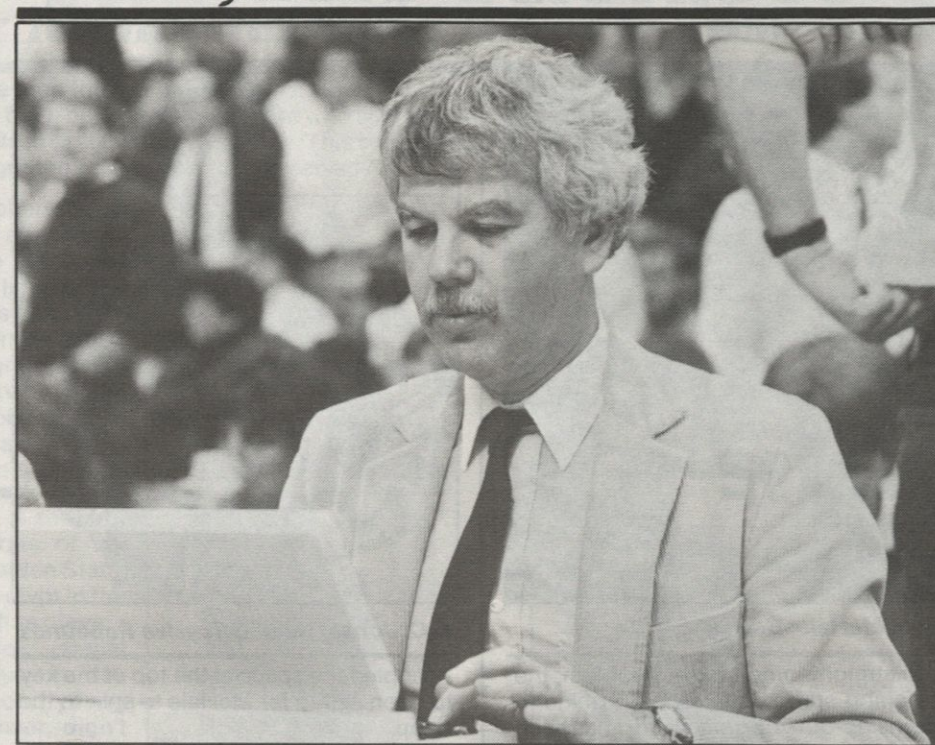
Ex-football coach Clint Albury was horrified in 1984 when he discovered the football team he had just taken over had a cumulative grade point average of 1.3. Albury brought in honor students to tutor his athletes at mandatory study halls. Result: team GPA rose to 2.45.

The School System: Savannah-Chatham County in Georgia

School Superintendent Ronald E. Etheridge's motto is: "Here you earn the uniform in the classroom first and on the field second." That's why the rule in Savannah-Chatham schools says an athlete must carry a C average or better.

INTERVIEW

Bob Ryan Looks Ahead to the Draft



Bob Ryan: Boston's Own

Bob Ryan, the nationally-known writer for the *Boston Globe*, has followed the "Bird-era" Celtics since their inception. He has seen and analyzed years of draft decisions and player acquisitions by the highly competent front office. This year found a degree of player movement and roster changes not seen in Boston for years. What's in store for the Celtics in the coming year? How does last year's drafting grade out? Are there any potential Celtics coming out of college now? These and other concerns are addressed by Bob in this interview.

Ryan took great delight in the final game between the Jayhawks and the Sooners in the NCAA Tournament. He begins his discussion with his views on that game.

CELTICS PRIDE: In general, what were the highlights of the final game in your view?

RYAN: Well, I think the obvious one was the most important. We finally were able to see Danny Manning of Kansas (6'11") prove himself in a bona fide "big" game. Manning did something even Larry Bird couldn't do: he took an undermanned team and led it to the championship. If there were any doubts about him, those doubts were definitely dispelled off that last game. If there was a small cloud over him, it was the question of if he would assert himself under those conditions. He did. He was at his best when the competitiveness was at its most intense.

CELTICS PRIDE: Did his performance remind you of others in a final?

RYAN: Three come to mind. Gail Goodrich had 42 against Michigan in the 1965 Final. Bill Walton's was probably the best — 44 on 19 of 20 from the floor against Memphis State in 1973. Most notable for the purposes of this discussion is Jack Givens' 42 against Duke in 1978.

CELTICS PRIDE: Why is that?

RYAN: Givens made himself into a first round draft choice off that performance. I'm not so sure the talent experts around the league thought he was that good coming into the tournament. He changed a lot of people's minds. However, I agree with Jimmy Rodgers: the tournament is just one look at some of the best players in college. There are several other games and abilities to consider.

What's happened over the last ten years is that post-season college tournaments have meant a great deal in the selection process. Last week the Portsmouth (VA) Tournament was held and that is a testing ground. The All-Star Tournament in Hawaii has been an influence, too. Another tournament in Orlando will tell other things. Then there's the NBA Camp in Chicago around Memorial Day. Recently, that's had a major influence. Including the Celtics' own choice of 1987, Reggie Lewis.

CELTICS PRIDE: Although this is early and these tournaments haven't been played yet, can you offer some insights into players who have impressed you in the NCAA's?

RYAN: There are a number of good players off the NCAA Tourney. Harvey Grant (Oklahoma) certainly did nothing to hurt himself and he is projected in the

top twelve. Mitch Richmond of Kansas State had an off game against KU, but he and Jeff Grayer of Iowa State are definite prospects at the off-guard. The debate between Richmond and Grayer has gone on for two years as to who is better. Locally, Tom Garrick of Rhode Island helped himself — particularly when he had 50 against West Virginia in the Atlantic Ten Tournament. Garrick's a player who really has an opportunity if he can continue to play well in Portsmouth and Chicago. Fennis Dembo probably hurt himself and might have been better off to enter the draft as a hardship last year after he scored 41 against UCLA in the tournament. Not that I'm for players leaving school early. I think they should stay in school all four years. But Dembo's attitude has become a question mark embedded in NBA people's minds.

CELTICS PRIDE: Who are the types that scouts do look for?

RYAN: Call around the league and ask player personnel people and you'll get a stock reply: these guys are looking for 'blue collar' type players. It's the Larry Bird attitude. Larry's willing to go down on the floor and dive for a lost ball. Those are the attitudes that characterize the ideal players (of course, they have to possess suitable talent.) Those are the guys who will work and work at the game and improve and adjust over the years.

CELTICS PRIDE: Who are the best players in the draft?

RYAN: It's an interesting draft, one that will have fans, media and professionals alike debating because of the uncertainty involved. Two players who will be solid NBA players (at the least) are Manning, of course, and the other, Hershey Hawkins of Bradley. I will go out on a limb and state that Hawkins will be the best guard to hit this league since Michael Jordan came in five years ago. Hawkins can score, he has range with his jumper, can drive, play defense and he led his team in rebounding as an off-guard. He's an Andrew Toney, without a questionable attitude. If Dennis Hopson played well

enough to be the third player taken last year, there's no doubt whatsoever in my mind that Hawkins will be there and in a big way.

CELTICS PRIDE: There's been a lot of comment recently that the emphasis formerly given to a center is diminishing. Do centers have the same impact now, and who are the best ones coming out?

RYAN: Well, the reason that centers might not have the same impact is that they have been facing such constant triple-teaming in every game they've played since high school, they no longer developed the all-around skills they needed to become 'great' players. That is, why develop a driving game, for example, if every time you move you're going against three guys? That's been the most pleasant outcome of the implementing of the three-point rule: the floor is spread and now, again, centers have some freedom. There are some interesting centers in the draft — Wil Perdue of Vanderbilt, of Marist, possibly Rony Seikely of Syracuse (although I think he fits as a power forward better), but at this time, they look to me as if they're glorified Jon Koncaks and are more suited to back-up center roles. The post-season tourneys will say more about these players.

But the important class appropos your question will be the high school class of 1988. Most experts think that this is the best school class for the position in several years: included among these are Alonzo Mourning of Chesapeake, Virginia, Laphonso Ellis of East St. Louis, Robert Werdann of New York, Don Maclean of Simi Valley, California. All of these youngsters will have a major impact on the game, in all likelihood. They'll be the players who will play all of their careers with the increased flexibility of the three-point line. I think that centers will very likely have a more meaningful impact. These kids are all 6'10" and they can play, from all reports.

CELTICS PRIDE: It seems to be an inexact science, though?

RYAN: There always are uncertainties. The best player who ever played the game was lacing his sneakers up in Indiana and no one heard a whisper about him out East — Larry Bird. Then there's the other extreme, Patrick Ewing. Patrick's beginning to fulfill his promise now, but is he the dominating player everyone thought? I don't know; he has to gather himself to jump to his peak and he's at his best blocking shots when he runs at people... it's not a simple matter of trying to become the next Bill Russell. And then, how do you fully explain Mark Jackson? Sometimes, the opportunity comes to a player. Jackson began handling the ball, was successful, the team needed it and suddenly, you've got an impact guard. And I know this sounds heretical, but the 1980s Bob Cousy exists in John Stockton of Utah. If Cousy were playing in 1988, he'd be a virtual copy of what Stockton is.

CELTICS PRIDE: How do you feel about last year's draft?

RYAN: I think the Celtics got something of a lucky break when Reggie Lewis injured his ankle. He went out to the NBA Chicago Camp, and he didn't play well. There were people in the league who swore up and down that Reggie Lewis was a lock in the middle of the first round until the Chicago camp. Then, he struggled, and he slipped all the way down to 22. I think he's a fine player.

A similar thing happened to their second choice, Brad Lohaus from Iowa. Reportedly, the team was preparing tapes on him as early as last February, expecting he'd be a possible first-rounder. Then, he goes out to some of the tourneys, including Hawaii, and he doesn't play well. Because the tourneys, by their nature, favor freelance one-on-one play, Lohaus slipped down. Sometimes it goes the other way... in that very same Hawaii tournament, Kevin McHale leaped from Denver's best-kept secret at five, and then out of that tournament, he's a lock to be in the top three. McHale reached that spot off his play there.

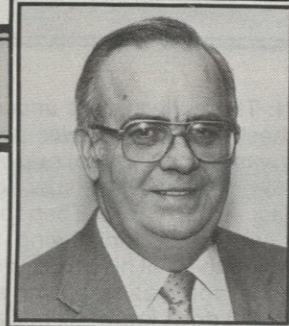
CELTICS PRIDE: Any surprises in store for this year's draft?

RYAN: You have to consider the influence of expansion and the possibility that teams, drafting low in the first round and facing the prospects of losing a good player, might package two players and try to trade up in the draft. Those are usually eleventh-hour decisions. But they might happen this year.

CELTICS PRIDE: Final Impressions?

RYAN: Manning and Hawkins, sure things. For many others, a lot of the burden will fall on the player personnel people in the next two months. Will they be able to project that a player will develop into a solid NBA player? Will they see things that are in the process of developing, but maybe aren't quite there yet? Like drafting a Dennis Johnson or a Maurice Cheeks — good college players, but not yet superstars at age 21. There are gambles galore, one of whom is Charles Smith of Pittsburgh. Sometimes I see him and I feel he'll be there, because he can run, shoot, block shots and make his free throws. But other times, I think "Wait until an Xavier McDaniel takes him inside — McDaniel will digest him!" I don't know, it's guessing, it's fodder for debate over the next two months.





By Eddie Gillyooly

Offensive Strategy

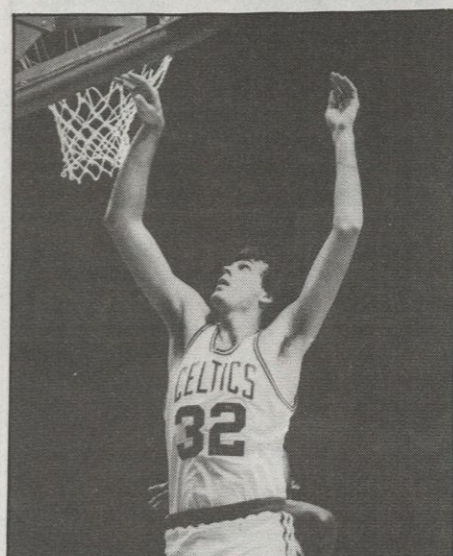
The inside-out game has become more consistent in recent weeks and by playoff time the Celtics could have it working to perfection. It's taken a long time this season to get it back.

With Kevin McHale missing the first 14 games of the season while recovering from surgery, the Celts got into the perimeter shooting habit, and it was difficult to break. That's what they referred to as their outside-inside game.

It wasn't in their game play, but the jump shooters got caught up many times looking for the outside shot first and the low post shot second. Then there were games when they'd play inside-outside one period and outside-inside the next.

Part of the problem was that the inside game wasn't all that effective when they would try it, because McHale didn't have his timing and rhythm when he first returned to the lineup, so they would try the easy route from the outside.

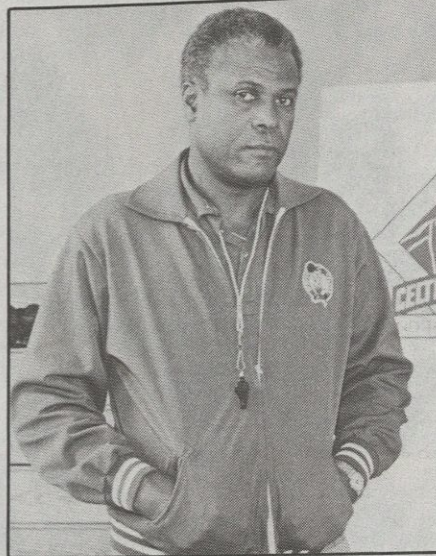
COURTSIDE VIEW



Kevin McHale: Back in Form

In straightening out the problem, the coaching staff added a new wrinkle to the inside-outside game, and it has been causing the opposition's defense fits. The offense now includes McHale kicking the ball out to a wide-open Dennis Johnson at the top of the key every time the Celtics forward is double-teamed.

It's a minor adjustment in floor planning, but it will continue until the opposition counters with a defensive play to take it away. In the past, when McHale set up in the low post, Robert Parish



K.C. Jones: Need Offensive Rebounds

occupied the space at the top of the key to open a path for McHale to spin to the hoop.

Parish now sets up on the weak side with Larry Bird and Danny Ainge in the corners at three-point range. That spreads out the defense and allows for better ball movement.

If DJ doesn't have a wide-open shot, he has the option of moving the ball left or right, to Bird or Ainge. Then it becomes another attack all over with Bird using Parish low or taking the shot and Ainge doing the same on the other side with McHale.

No matter what the option, the defense is always on the move, with the Celtics making three to five passes before going to the hoop. Eventually, one of the five has a wide-open shot.

McHale has taken a lot of ribbing about his non-passing, but in recent weeks he has become a perfectionist at finding the open man, and most of the time it's DJ at the top of the key.

The offensive strategy was at its precise best against the Dallas Mavericks when DJ nailed nine of 11 from the field and McHale wound up with a career-high 10 assists, mostly on the baskets by Johnson.

After the game, Mavs forward Mark Aguirre commented, "We thought he (Johnson) was the man to leave open, but we guessed wrong. The Celtics floor spacing was just incredible. I had to back off Larry a little because of McHale and Parish down low, and that gave Larry a lot of open shots."

With Aguirre caught in the middle, Bird pumped in seven three-pointers. Ainge added three more to give the Celtics 110 in 16 attempts. Bird set a team record with his seven bombs.

When Aguirre did challenge Bird, Larry either dumped the ball in to Parish in the low post, used a Parish pick for a drive or short jumper or game the ball back to Johnson, who moved it to the other side of the court to Ainge. It was picture-perfect.

Certainly the three-point shot has helped open up the court for the Celtics on offense. Bird and Ainge are the most devastating three-point duo in the league, and fortunately, some teams are lax in covering them outside the stripe.

The Celts have always been at their best when the front court of Bird, McHale

and Parish dominate the offense. The theory, of course, is that a five-foot shot is a better percentage shot than a 20-footer. With Parish keeping his man (the center) busy, McHale has never had too many problems with double-teams when the defense is a forward and guard. He can usually power his way to the hoop or take the fall-away jumper.

And now, when he's really crowded front and back, McHale is kicking the ball out instead of trying to find an opening between the double-team for his shot. It's to his advantage, because if he gets the ball again, the double-team is much looser than it was on the initial pass in.

Another advantage in passing the ball out is that if the Celtics move the ball around the perimeter with three or four passes, McHale is usually one-on-one for the second entry pass and the shot is almost automatic.

Pistons coach Chuck Daly, after the Celtics' 117-110 win over his club, commented, "DJ played outstanding; we took a few calculated risks with DJ, but he made the shots. The Celtics are a very smart team."

Dallas coach John MacLeod had similar comments after his club lost 110-101. "DJ is tough when he has his rhythm. When he's 'on' that's another dimension for them, another part of their arsenal. The Celts are a well-coached team."

K.C. Jones is pleased with the way the offense is coming together, but cites areas of needed improvements in offensive rebounding and defensive intensity.

"We're not hitting the offensive boards as well as we should and we've got to concentrate on that phase of the game," said the Celtics coach, "and we've had some problems keeping up the intensity on defense."

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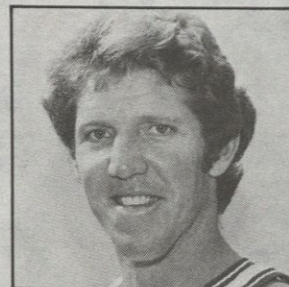
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CELTICS PERSPECTIVE

Which of Your Teammates Have Never Gotten Proper Recognition?

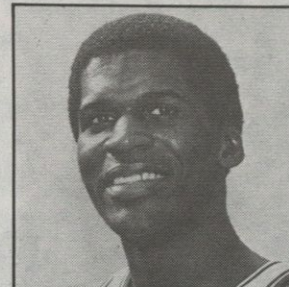
The Celtics have reached the top of their profession, and along the way, stars that they are, they have had a number of invaluable teammates to help them on their way. The man who sacrifices his scoring to play the opposing team's best player. Or the player who passes up his own shots in order to set up the star. This type of player contributes to the attractiveness of team sports. What players do the Celtics feel never got the recognition they deserved?

Bill Walton: I think the answer is simple: Robert Parish and Dennis Johnson are the two most overlooked teammates I've ever played with. Because of the way they play so great every game with so little public recognition. The bulk of recognition on this team goes to players who deserve it, don't get me wrong; Kevin McHale, Danny Ainge and Larry Bird are all great players who play extremely hard every night. That's why they're at the top. But I really realize Dennis' and Robert's work every game: they come to play every night and they go at it hard. They're very durable; they're money players.



Bill Walton

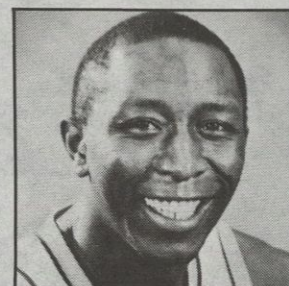
Robert Parish: There have been many. I thought personally, an overlooked player in terms of my development was my assistant coach at Golden State, Joe Roberts. He taught me how to play the pivot in the NBA. On the Warriors, I can think of three fine players who did a lot, but didn't receive recognition: Jamaal Wilkes was a great small forward who played in Rick Barry's shadow. Wayne Cooper was a good young power player who, before going to Denver, didn't receive his just due. Finally, E.C. Coleman was a fine defensive forward who didn't get much notice — defensive players tend to get overlooked in a losing situation.



Robert Parish

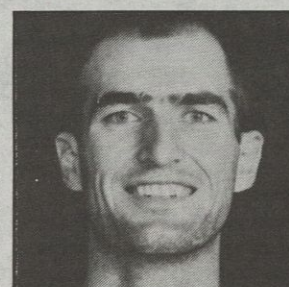
In Boston, I'd have to say Cedric Maxwell was overlooked. He and Larry Bird were a great forward duo. Maxwell played great defense for us and sacrificed his offense to do it.

Dirk Minniefield: I'd have to say that the most under-rated player I played with was Rodney McCray when I was with the Houston Rockets. The man can play, and I have to honestly say (although the label is tossed around too freely) that Rodney is a superstar. He just goes out and does the things necessary for a team to be great. He can score, rebound, play strong defense, and is willing to take the big shot in the clutch. All this with minimal recognition. I think Rodney gets praised, but not often enough.



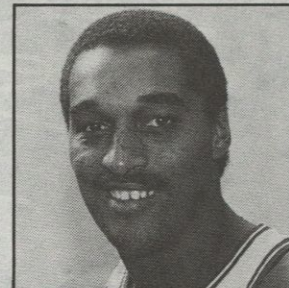
Dirk Minniefield

Fred Roberts: I think the most under-rated player I played with was a backup center at Brigham Young University by the name of Don McGuire. He was a seven-footer from the Los Angeles area, and I think he had a good array of skills, along with that size, to be a real contributor to our team. But he never got the chance at BYU; the coaches made a decision early about him, and he was stuck with a label that he couldn't shake throughout the rest of his career.



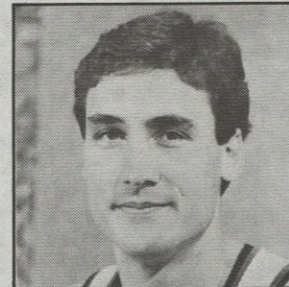
Fred Roberts

Dennis Johnson: I go back to when I was just coming up in the pros with the Seattle SuperSonics. We had a number of talented players on that team, including Gus Williams, Lonnie Shelton, Jack Sikma, myself... but we weren't really going anywhere until John Johnson took over at small forward and really ran the offense from up front. Of all the players on that championship team, JJ received the least publicity, but he was always going out, playing hard and making our offense run right, especially in the halfcourt execution. He was a leader; subtle qualities like that rarely receive the notice they merit.

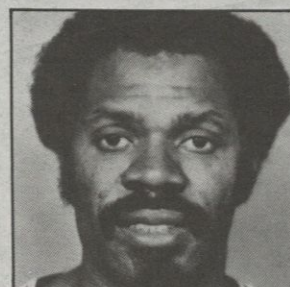


Dennis Johnson

Jim Paxson: I think the best way to answer that is to look back to an earlier time in my career, because in the NBA, most of the men are such great players that it's hard sometimes to think of them as being overlooked. My teammate in high school and at Dayton, Jack Zimmerman was really the most unsung teammate I've ever had. I learned a great deal about moving without the ball and shooting from behind screens because of Jack. He was a great shooter, a master of the three-point shot before that rule came into existence. He ended up playing in Israel briefly before making it to one of the final cuts with the Trail Blazers. He was just a degree too small.

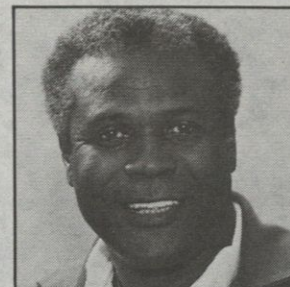


Jim Paxson



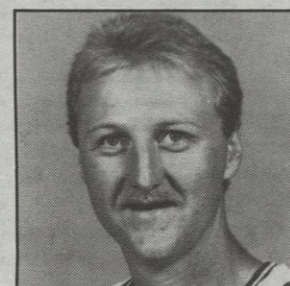
Artis Gilmore

Artis Gilmore: The most overlooked player I've ever played with was a high school teammate whose name was Orlando Brown. He was a guard and he had exceptional ability, very fast, a great scorer who could both drive and shoot from the outside. A very smart player. He was recruited some, but after thinking about going to college, he turned the opportunity down. I don't know why... I guess he had no desire to go to school, although I'm not certain that he understood the opportunity a college education offered him. That was a case of being overlooked. Orlando had a great deal of potential, but the right recruiter never found him.



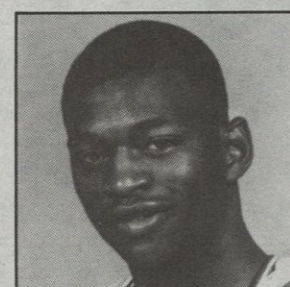
K.C. Jones

K.C. Jones: There were many players I played with coming up through the ranks, including Hal Perry at San Francisco, and many, many others with the Celtics, including Satch Sanders, whose defensive ability was legendary. As coach of our team, I never think that the guys get enough recognition. We're fortunate; we have players who make sacrifices in order for the team to win. On other teams there are several whom I've respected through watching films and by coaching against them on the bench: Buck Williams of the Nets, Cliff Levingston of the Hawks, Dave Corzine of the Bulls, Steve Stipanovich of the Pacers, Phil Hubbard of Cleveland, Detlef Schrempf and Brad Davis of the Mavericks, as well as Jim Petersen and Rodney McCray of the Houston Rockets. And there are others.



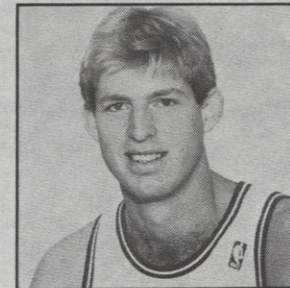
Larry Bird

Larry Bird: I'd have to say Robert Parish is a solid choice here (although I've been fortunate to play with teammates who sacrificed for the good of the team goal). Robert gives up a lot of offense, but always comes to play. A lot of what he does — rebounding, setting picks, leadership — gets overlooked.



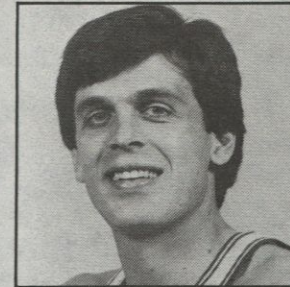
Reggie Lewis

Reggie Lewis: I go back to my high school season with Dunbar. That player had to be David Wingate, who was a great player for us then and went on to be an important player for both Georgetown and the Philadelphia 76ers. I learned a lot about the game from watching David play. Most of the media exposure on our team went to Muggsy Bogues and Reggie Williams, while David went out there every night and played effectively. I respected the way he went out there and played hard and was indifferent to media coverage.



Brad Lohaus

Brad Lohaus: The most overlooked teammate I've ever had has to be Robert Parish. There is just a very noticeable difference in this team when Robert is out of the lineup... he's such a force inside. I have to think he's one of the best inside players in the league. He should have made the All-Star team this year. I think "unsung" really doesn't apply to college athletics. Everybody in college gets noticed; it's the nature of the college game, with cheerleaders and college newspapers, things like that. I've watched Robert play all year and it's been a meaningful education about how to play the pivot in the NBA.



Kevin McHale

Kevin McHale: I have to think, with all of my joking about him aside, that the most overlooked teammate I've ever played with is Danny Ainge. Especially in his first three or four years with our team. Danny made a lot of things happen out there for us — with his scrap, hustle and determination — but most people tended to focus on the parts of his game that were weak. I just didn't see it that way; he helped us win two championships while people were looking to other guys as heroes.

Boys and Girls Club 3 On 3 Tournament



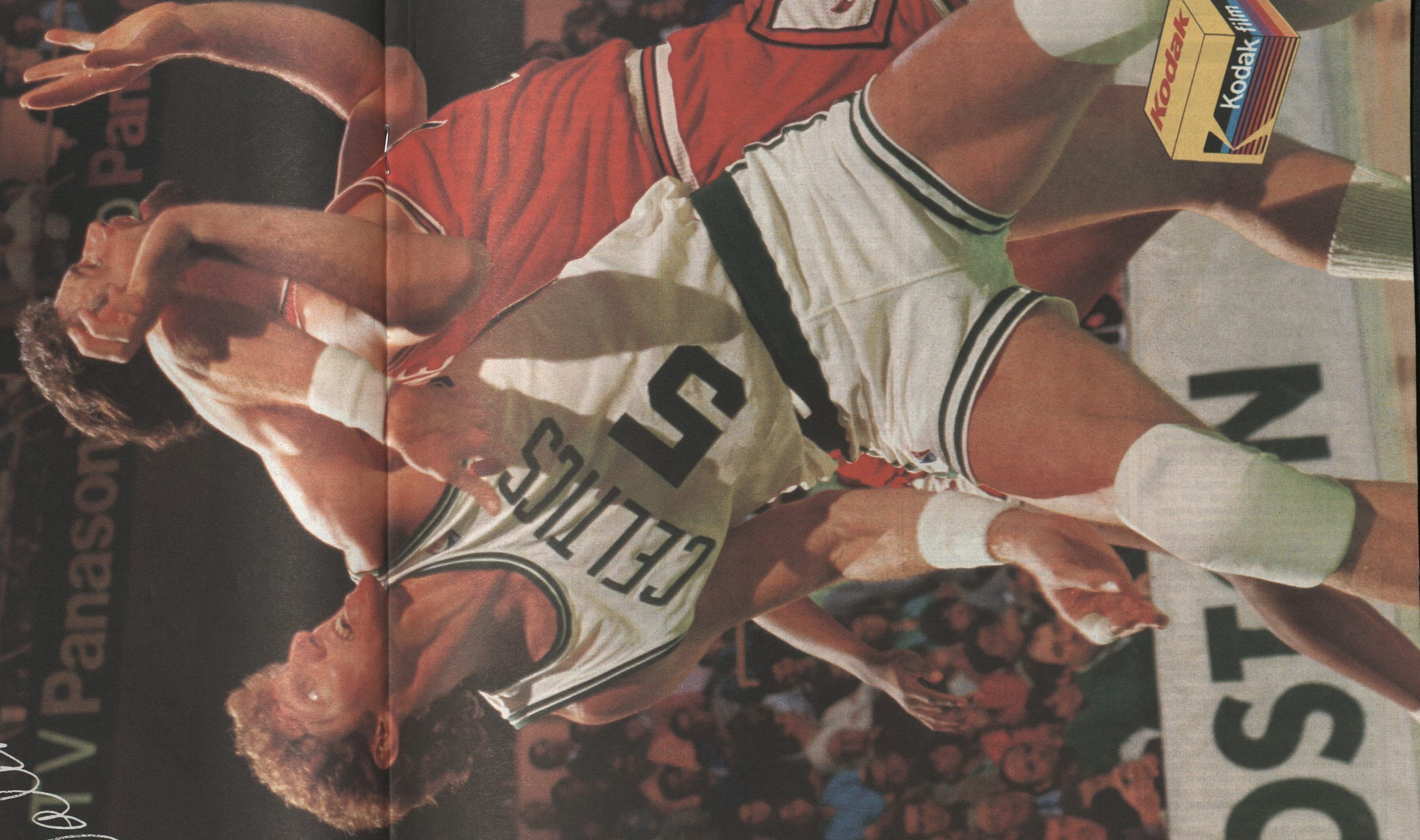
For three years now, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston have directed the city-wide Red Auerbach Three-on-Three Basketball Tourney as a function of the Red Auerbach Fund of the Boston Foundation. This year, the event brought together over 100 inner-city high school students to play non-varsity half-court basketball.

The winners in the various age groups visited the Boston Garden and were presented awards at the half of the Celtics game against the New Jersey Nets on Friday, April 8th. In the boys 16 to 17 category, the champions were the South Boston Boys and Girls Club team, (pictured above), featuring Mike Warwick, Steve Lavey and Dorsey Connolly. In the boys 13 to 15 division, the winning team was the Salvation Army Boys Club, with Larry Merritt, Segundo Rivera and Ulises Gonzalez. The girls 16 to 17 winner was also from the Salvation Army Boys Club, with Minique Suttles, Mareka Hansard and Melanie Reardon. The winning team in the girls 13 to 15 division was the Daniel Marr Boys and Girls Club team, featuring Brenna Callahan, Kerry Woods and Lorrie Higgins.





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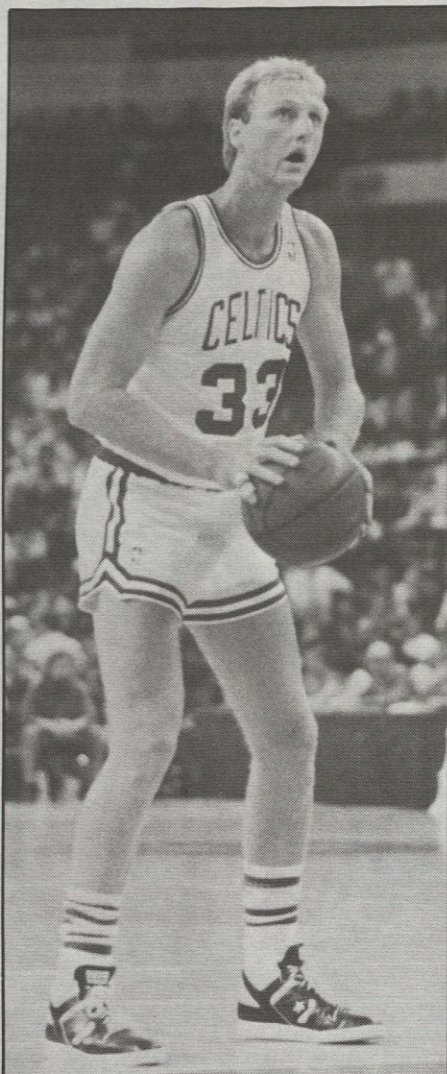
By Bob Schron

Turnaround. As we might have predicted, the Green is making another run for the title, their fifth in as many seasons under coach **K.C. Jones**. ... **John MacLeod**, the Dallas coach, noted a significant difference between the Celtics of February 12 (106-104 winners in Reunion Arena on a Larry Bird three-point FG with .04) and the Cs of April 3, easy 110-101 victors over the Mavericks. "They're considerably better," allowed MacLeod. "They're very aggressive on offense, very tuned in to each other. We tried to create a defensive situation by forcing a man (**Dennis Johnson**) to beat us from outside. They're just a tremendous team." ... Johnson shot 9 of 11 for that contest. ... **Mark Aguirre**, the Mavericks' All-Star forward, marvelled also at how well the Celtics knew where each player was on the floor. "Their spacing was fantastic; when they sensed a double-team they knew immediately where to pass the ball. Their intensity is really noticeable." ... This, only ten days after what could have been a devastating defeat; leading 75-45 over the 76ers in the third quarter, Boston proceeded to give it up. **Charles Barkley** led the 76ers to a 97-93 win, his first ever in the Garden

... After that game, the proud Celts, humiliated, nevertheless met with the press, at least **Larry Bird**, **Danny Ainge**, **Kevin McHale** and **K.C. Jones** did ... Bird, who missed 13 of 14 down the stretch, repeatedly blamed himself for the defeat; Jones addressed the issue to the media, but in private conversation, obviously hurt and puzzled, refused to talk about the game at all.

Ellen Jones, his wife, had a comment though; with the team facing a game the following night in Madison Square Garden against a Knicks team that had won 16 of their previous 17 at home (losing only to the Lakers), Ellen Jones promised a win. "They'll be that much more determined," commented the coach's wife. ... The following morning the team took an 11 a.m. shuttle to New York and according to a source, acted as if they didn't care about the previous night. "That worried me," said the source. Whereupon Bird nailed three three-pointers in the first half against the Knicks and the Celtics were off to a 5-0 week. "You have to forget about these games," Bird also said in the aftermath of the Sixers' debacle, "because in two months, during the playoffs, nobody will even remember this game."

Cedric Maxwell returned to Boston with **Bill Fitch** and **Ray Melchiorre** and the Rockets last week (Boston: 117-110). ... According to a source, "Max has adjusted to limited playing time; he feels grateful to Bill because Bill rescued him from the Clippers situation. Max really helped this team last year in the playoffs, but it's tough on him over a long season. I'm not certain he has the legs for it any more." ... Maxwell compared his role with the Rockets to that of **M.L. Carr** during the latter's final two seasons here ... The two met after the game on March 30th, as did **World B. Free**. ... Free and Carr were teammates on the Guilford



Larry Bird: Letter to Boston

College NAIA championship team in 1973. ... Melchiorre on Fitch: "He's much more relaxed in Houston. It's just hard on a man when everything he does is constantly compared to **Red Auerbach** in the press. ...

Roger Clemens, the Boston Red Sox Opening Day pitcher (the Sox lost that one, 5-3, although Clemens fanned 11) was an onlooker as the Celtics defeated the Mavericks April 3rd. ... **Clifford Ray**, the former teammate of **Robert Parish**, and now an advance scout for the Mavericks, was a visitor with Parish before the contest against the Mavericks. ... Another famous guest — famous in informal circles — took in a Boston Garden Celtics contest. None other than **Leon the Barber**, the Pistons' staunchest fan, made the journey to the Garden when the Pistons played here April 1. ... Leon has a seat behind the visitors' bench in Detroit and rides the visitors unmercifully with quips, insults, jokes. ... **Jack Donahue**, the Canadian National coach and former high school coach of **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar** was a visitor to the team's practice at Hellenic College, March 1. ... **Red Auerbach** on the NCAA Tournament: "The most outstanding characteristic of the best teams in the Tournament (especially Arizona and Oklahoma) is their conditioning. You can't treat the kids like kids on the practice floor. You have to get them prepared to play 40 minutes (the length of a college game) in every game of the Tournament. You can do that with timeouts and TV timeouts."

Former Associated Press and *Boston Herald* sportswriter **Jack Clary**, who is

now a full-time author, covered the Celtics while Auerbach was coaching and Russell was the star player. Calary, in expressing tribute to the Celtics' system through the years, also wasn't surprised about Russell's apparent loss of interest in the Kings' coaching job. About the Celtics: "I used to go to the Celtics' practices under Red, and it would be an education, both about the game of basketball and about how to select people (for the team) and how to motivate them. There's a certain type of player who has always played for Red Auerbach and that player is hard-nosed, has no interest in the game but winning. Any real ego problems never really got anywhere with the Celtics. The group refused to let that kind of guy stay around long, the kind of guy who was interested in individual stats." ... About Russell: "I wasn't surprised Bill let the job go. He's the guy who won all the time as a player and as a player-coach. But since he's done that already, I suspect he doesn't think he has to do it again. If he looked at those players and saw they either weren't talented or interested enough to go out and do the small things necessary to win, I don't think he'd bother to change those guys."

... Said Bill Walton, who modelled his game after Russell's: "I think Russ did the right thing. Those guys just don't know how to play the game."

Mark Aguirre, the Mavericks temperamental talent at small forward, was asked to hypothetically switch places with Larry Bird. How would Aguirre do with the Celtics and Bird with the Mavericks? "I don't ever think of the game that way. At this level, guys are so good throughout the league that their (i.e., the players') only responsibility is to go out and play the game the way he can. Coaches are the guys who build systems. Ask **John MacLeod** that question." ... Asked further who he'd want to play under if he had the choice of any coach in the league, Aguirre warily replied, "The best coach for me is John MacLeod." ... Aguirre and MacLeod were reportedly feuding as the Mavs were enduring a 0-4 road trip through the East in early April. ... **Dennis Johnson**, although he'd never admit it, is a relieved escapee from the structured system of MacLeod. Johnson on another subject: when he'll retire. "I never place a specific time limit on something like that. If you say you'll retire at a certain time, what happens if you change your mind? Then people come back at you and slap you in the face with that earlier plan. When the time comes, I'll just be ready to leave the game."

K.C. Jones on the subject of defense. "Good defense is something that can be taught. It's not usually natural. Good defense can be fun, although most players don't think of it that way. Scoring's fun, but defensively, you can play the 'perfect' game: disrupt another team's plans totally, cause turnovers, take a guy's mind away from him when he has the ball." ... The team defenses Jones respects most around the league: Los Angeles Lakers, Detroit, Atlanta, the trapping defenses of the Knicks, Denver and the Celtics. ... sometimes the wonderful world of the NBA can be distressing;

one player on the suggested early return of Bill Walton and the probable designation of Reggie Lewis on Injured Reserve: "Sometimes things just aren't right — placing Reggie on IR ... I hope we know what we're doing. I just don't think Bill's ready to play yet." ... **Robert Parish** was forced to miss the week of practice between the April 3 game against the Mavericks and the April 8 game against New Jersey because of his injured knee ... **Dirk Minniefield** was weathering a slight case of the flu that same week. ... **Fred Roberts**' practice gear that same week: Larry Bird's old goggles. ... The Celtics practiced that week with a clock and a scoreboard, mostly to relieve the boredom of the week sans games at the Garden (because the Stanley Cup contenders, the Boston Bruins, were hosting the Sabres and the ice was down in the Garden) ... **Kevin McHale** made the suggestion about the clock and then walked into the equipment room with Equipment Manager **Wayne Lebeaux** and set the clock up himself. ... McHale set a career high in assists against Dallas with 10. ... It was the third time in the past three weeks he's set a career high. ... Among the candidates rumored to be headed for the expansion Charlotte Hornets: **World B. Free** and **Cedric Maxwell**, the former Celtic. Maxwell has strong roots in Charlotte, having grown up in nearby Kinston and played at North Carolina-Charlotte. Free played under Player Personnel Director Gene Littles when Littles was an assistant at Cleveland and Free starred there. The latter possibility would be less so if **George Karl** is coach.

Members of the **Grateful Dead** visited the Celtics practice last week with **Bill Walton**. ... **Larry Bird** was the subject of an extended feature on local Westinghouse television station WBZ's Evening Magazine program. ... **Kevin McHale** was the spotlight figure on a public service announcement related to prevention of drunk driving last week. The segment was produced by SportsChannel's **Kurt Jacobson**. ... **Danny Ainge**, **Kevin McHale** and the Boston Red Sox **Roger Clemens** and **Bruce Horst** made a joint appearance in Boston last week. ... **Dennis Johnson** attended the Red Sox' Opening Day game against the Detroit Tigers. ... **Larry Bird**, who has made several appearances in support of **Dave Cowens** and the New England Sports Museum, wrote a letter to *The Boston Globe* in support of the Museum's efforts to relocate in the Custom House in Fanueil Hall in Boston. ... Kevin McHale is reported to be planning a summer basketball camp for Cape Cod this year. ... Among other Celtics planning to hold camps this summer: **Robert Parish** in New Hampshire, **K.C. Jones** in Vermont, **Red Auerbach** in Waltham (where the Celtics' Rookie Camp will be held in August, and former Celtic **Dave Cowens** in Weston. Future issues will contain information about these camps.

Jimmy Rodgers was scouting the Portsmouth (VA) All-Star Tournament in early April with Red Auerbach. ... Former Celtic **Bill Russell**, now Head of Player Personnel of the Kings (and their former coach) was also scouting the tournament.

GAME BY GAME

Boston 106 New Jersey 105, March 28 at The Meadowlands Arena
The Celtics staged a stirring second half rally to overtake the last place Nets in New Jersey. Boston, by winning, thereby avenged a defeat to the Nets earlier this month (New Jersey embarrassed the Celtics in Boston, 117-107 March 2nd in Willis Reed's second game as Nets' coach).

Another Statue Unveiled



Converse Inc. recently paid tribute to the outstanding career of one of basketball's greatest players by presenting a limited-edition bronze sculpture of Julius Erving. The statue is a 700-pound bronze sculpture commissioned by the Philadelphia 76ers, Converse and Prism Cable as a tribute to the man whose game thrilled and inspired fans throughout the world.

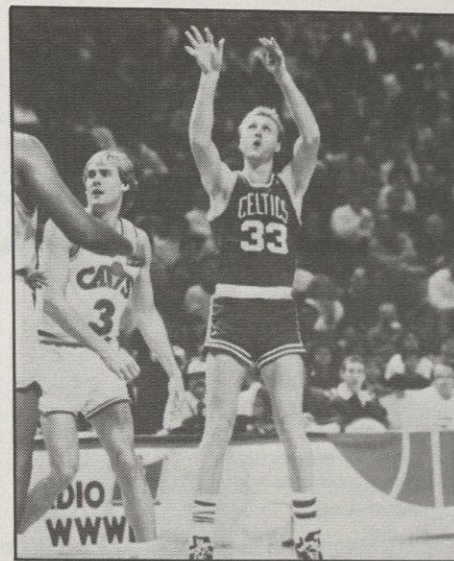
Created by renowned sculptor Barney Bright of Louisville, Kentucky, the sculpture is exact in every detail and was unveiled at a pre-game ceremony at the Philadelphia Spectrum on April 19 when Erving's number (6) was retired and a banner hoisted to the rafters in his honor. The sculpture will be placed outside the Spectrum later in the spring, where it will remain on permanent display.

"Converse has long treasured our relationship with Julius Erving," said Converse chairman, Richard Loynnd. "Both on and off the court, Julius has exemplified our own tradition of combining high performance with style."

Erving has been involved with Converse for many years, both as an endorser and company spokesperson. His athletic endeavors have made him one of basketball's most unique and respected figures, and his ability to excite a crowd with spectacular drives and dunks elevated basketball to new heights of popularity.

In addition to the life-sized statue, three hundred 15.5-inch replicas will be available to collectors. A portion of these proceeds will be donated to the Lupus Foundation, in memory of Erving's brother, who died of the disease at the age of 16.

"It was the wish of everyone involved that the statue not only honor Julius' accomplishments, but also benefit a needy cause such as Lupus," added Loynnd.



Larry Bird: Seven 3-Pointers

The Celtics appeared to be headed for a second consecutive defeat to New Jersey as Roy Hinson (20 points) and Otis Birdsong (19) paced the Nets to 29-24 and 62-52 leads at the first quarter and halftime breaks. The Celtics, playing without center Robert Parish for the third straight night, were also hurt by Larry Bird's errant (9-22 overall) shooting from the field. New Jersey would expand their lead through the initial nine minutes of the second half, taking leads of 71-54 and 84-68 as Pearl Washington (10 points) sparked this surge. But the Celtics would rally, chiefly behind their bench.

Kevin McHale surged in the early moments of the final quarter, scoring an inside basket and then smartly drawing a breakaway foul (two FTs and possession, with which Dirk Minniefield immediately scored). This sequence whittled the lead down to 88-83 and the comeback was on. Bird heated up down the stretch, converting a pair of three-point field goals and a smart baseline drive, which forged a late 103-103 tie. The latter hoop capped a drive that featured three guards (Danny Ainge, Dennis Johnson and Jim Paxson). After strong Boston defense, Paxson took a pass off an Ainge penetration and tallied down the baseline, drawing a foul with the basket. His free throw provided the final margin of victory. Bird paced the Celtics with 27 points, while McHale had 20 with 10 rebounds. Paxson finished with 12, as did Mark Acres. Acres also had 8 rebounds for the Celtics.

Boston 117 Houston 110, March 3 at Boston Garden

Larry Bird scored 35 points and Fred Roberts came off the bench to spark a critical fourth quarter surge as the Celtics defeated the Houston Rockets in the Garden. The Rockets played without their star center, Akeem Olatunji, who missed the game with a strained right medial lateral ligament. The game marked the return to action of Robert Parish, however, as the Celtics' center was back after missing the previous three contests with a sprained left knee.

Boston wasted little time exploiting their advantage in the middle as Parish scored twice in the first three possessions of the game. Boston had a 10-2 lead before the Rockets played their way back in. They battled back to within 19-17 behind Sleepy Floyd and Robert Reid, and then Floyd sparked the Rockets to their first lead at 29-28 late in the first period. The game would remain tense throughout. In a second quarter that had three ties and seven lead changes, Houston gained a 63-60 lead when the half ended as Buck Johnson shot 6 of 7 from the field.

Roberts played a significant role down the stretch. He scored five quick points, ran the floor and pulled down two rebounds, and the Celtics exploded in the opening five minutes of the last quarter. His classic give-and-go with Bird at the 7:48 mark registered a 101-91 lead for Boston and the Celtics outplayed the Rockets down the stretch for the victory. Bird led the Celtics' scoring attack, shooting 12-23 from the field, 11-11 from the charity stripe and also had 9 assists. Kevin McHale suffered through a highly unusual 2-14 shooting night but led the Cs with 13 rebounds. Roberts scored 16 with 4 rebounds and 3 assists.

Boston 121 Detroit 110, April 1 at Boston Garden

Larry Bird and Kevin McHale combined for 61 points, including the key baskets down the stretch, as the Celtics broke open a tight game in the closing minutes to defeat Detroit in Boston. With the win, the Celtics moved four games ahead of Detroit in the race for the best record in the Eastern Conference. Including playoffs, the home team has won sixteen straight games in this series and in addition, Detroit hasn't won in Boston now since December, 1982.

The teams battled evenly throughout the first half, as the Pistons edged out to a 54-53 margin after a 27-27 tie at the first quarter break. The Pistons made an early bid to control matters in the second quarter as they went ahead, 40-33 against

Boston's reserve unit. But Dennis Johnson (17 points, 10 assists) keyed a fast-break attack which evened affairs at 47-47 and 49-49 until Detroit gained that slight lead on a pair of Rick Mahorn free throws with no time on the clock. McHale had fouled the 6-8 Mahorn on the latter's shot attempt from halfcourt at the horn.

Yet, if McHale made a foolish mistake then, he redeemed himself later. The Celtics would take the play away from the Pistons down the stretch, as Bird nailed a three-point field goal and Danny Ainge added a pair in a ten minute stretch. Boston had a 93-85 lead heading into the final quarter until Detroit made a final run. The Pistons closed to within 103-100 in the final two minutes before McHale made a brilliant, spinning, corner-turning drive on the right baseline for a score and foul. That gave the Cs a six point margin and they held on to win. Bird had 32, McHale 29 and each player had 11 rebounds for Boston. All five starters scored in double figures. Bill Laimbeer had 22 points for Detroit, but only 7 after the break. Mahorn had 18 off the bench and Isiah Thomas contributed 15 points and 110 assists.

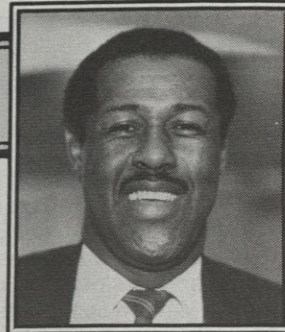
Boston 110 Dallas 101, April 3 at Boston Garden

Boston concluded a 5-0 week, four of those wins against likely playoff teams, as they defeated the Mavericks in Boston. The Celtics were paced again by Larry Bird, who added another record to his list of achievements in the Sunday noon game against Dallas. Bird nailed seven three-point field goals (7-10 from that distance), setting a single game team mark for the long distance shot.

Boston won with a determined running game, forcing the Mavericks to rally late in the first quarter to move within 28-23. Then, in the second period, Bird paced a wide-open, 19-3 Celtics flurry that peaked at 57-40 (after a Danny Ainge 3-pointer) late in the half. After leading 59-46 at halftime, Boston surged again in the third period behind Dennis Johnson (9 for 11 from the field). Boston led 90-70 late in that period on back-to-back Bird three-pointers and the Celtics coasted thereafter against Dallas, which trailed Boston by only one game a week earlier. Boston moved five games ahead of Dallas and would likely have the homecourt advantage if the teams meet in the playoffs. Bird led Boston with 32 and Kevin McHale added 20 with a career high 10 assists. Dallas was paced by Roy Tarpley's 22 points and 16 rebounds.

Boston Celtics Statistics

WON 54, LOST 21												BOSTON CELTICS												As of April 12, 1988																					
		-FIELD GOALS-										3-PT. FG		-FREE THROWS-				--REBOUNDS--																											
PLAYER		PTS	REB	AST	BLK	STL	FT	FG	3PT	PF	DD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	OT	TOT	PTS	REB	AST	BLK	STL	FT	FG	3PT	PF	DD	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	OT	TOT	PTS	REB	AST	BLK	STL							
BIRD		71	70	27	5	1	82.3	52.3	32.5	27	227	367	423	915	101	566	667	432	145	0	118	202	49	2130	30.0	41	1	26	126	88	1322	22.8	33	33	33	33	33								
MCHALE		58	87	21	61	903	836	602	0	0	316	392	806	152	344	496	153	164	1	26	126	88	1322	22.8	33	1	26	126	88	1322	22.8	33	33	33	33	33									
AINGE		74	74	27	60	437	901	485	134	325	142	162	677	33	176	229	462	185	1	105	140	17	1150	15.5	33	5	33	138	80	732	14.2	26	26	26	26	26									
PARISH		67	67	2098	395	675	585	0	0	162	252	730	158	417	575	103	176	5	33	138	80	732	14.2	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26							
JOHNSON		72	71	2539	333	748	434	11	43	243	262	842	61	170	231	363	192	0	90	187	27	92	128	12.8	24	1	24	29	5	273	7.2	15	15	15	15	15									
PAIXSON (TOT)		31	1	633	108	236	498	8	16	33	62	855	13	20	33	63	61	0	24	29	5	273	7.2	15	1	24	29	5	273	7.2	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15							
PAIXSON (BOS)		21	0	370	65	129	304	1	8	39	44	886	5	10	15	36	32	0	17	18	4	170	8.1	15	1	17	18	4	170	8.1	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15							
ROBERTS		67	12	908	145	297	488	0	3	113	143	779	54	91	145	70	100	0	15	60	14	403	6.0	20	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14							
LEWIS		45	0	365	83	176	472	0	3	38	55	691	26	29	35	26	48	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14							
LEWIS (TOT)		64	3	438	108	221	489	3	12	47	58	810	42	67	129	43	117	1	18	34	0	246	4.2	20	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14							
LEWIS (BOS)		64	26	823	92	167	351	0	0	56	111	903	63	127	190	17	139	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	0	14	26	14	204	4.5	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14							
ACRES		40	3	451	51	87	586	0	0	37	74	800	48	79	127	8	85	0	9	34	17	139	3.5	15	0	9	34	17	139	3.5	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15							
MINNIEFIELD (TOT)		65	4	967	97	198	490	4	14	39	52	750	27	63	90	201	118	0	54	81	3	237	3.6	16	0	54	81	3	237	3.6	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16							
MINNIEFIELD (BOS)		34	4	765	72	130	480	3	9	25	29	862	19	50	69	163	92	0	39	65	3	172	3.2	16	0	39	65	3	172	3.2	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16							
CELTICS		75	18100	3292	6342	919	254	649	1492	2103	805	861	2253	3114	2243	1647	10	378	1194	392	8530	113.7	143	75	18100	3184	6671	477	102	338	1559	2040	764	1036	2015	3051	1881	1822	25	675	1090	315	8029	107.1	139
OPPONENTS		75	18100	3292	6342	919	254	649	1492	2103	805	861	2253	3114	2243	1647	10	378	1194	392	8530	113.7	143	75	18100	3184	6671	477	102	338	1559	2040	764	1036	2015	3051	1881	1822	25	675	1090	315	8029	107.1	139



AS I SEE IT

By M.L. Carr

Defining Roles

With the team's victory over the Detroit Pistons in early April, the Celtics moved four games ahead of their closest competitors for the best record in the Eastern Conference. I think what we're seeing is a Celtics' team that has put aside all thoughts of giving anything less than their finest efforts this playoff season. I think that's been a source of concern among the players and I think they've worked that out among themselves. I also believe that with the season having run its course, the players have become accustomed to their roles. Has there ever been a bigger team in the NBA than our front line? Having the size we do off the bench — that's imposing bench strength.

The Celtics had some trials and tribulations this season; there were the injuries to Kevin McHale, Larry Bird, Dennis Johnson and, recently, to Robert Parish. Bill Walton missed the entire year, and as a result of all these problems, the team had some difficulties ironing out timing problems. It's hard playing with a lineup that has new players in it every game. Players become used to the way a player passes the ball. They become accustomed to the cutting of a teammate, or the way someone plays defense. This season the Celtics have played more strict man-to-man defense than in past seasons. This is a team that switches more than most teams, as well. All of these factors mean that consistency in the lineup is vital for success. If injuries occur, you aren't going to have proper timing and you aren't going to have the confidence that's necessary to win.

But the Celtics have straightened themselves out. The return to the East, after a tough West Coast trip, helped. Dennis Johnson's increased aggressiveness on the offensive end helped. But mostly, it was the team's understanding of their roles up and down the bench that has helped this team do well.

Our teams didn't always have the best talent, but we did have the best understanding of how to win. Kevin came off the bench a lot when I played — his attitude was never one of a shy and bashful rookie. He always went out there to win. But he never questioned that there were players with more experience ahead of him. He was content to answer the call when it came. The same with Cedric Maxwell; he was an outstanding scorer before Larry came to Boston. But midway through Larry's second season, the decision was made to play Max on the opposing team's best scorer. Nothing was questioned. We defined our roles and understood them and went out and performed. Winning was the primary goal.

I think the atmosphere throughout the Celtics organization contributes to this



Bill Walton: Frontcourt Insurance

role acceptance. In an environment that is conducive to sacrifice and commitment, you will make adjustments in your own style in order to help the entire enterprise succeed. I didn't like sitting out the majority of my final two seasons here, but I was determined to be the best twelfth man in the history of the league. Sure, I would taunt guys, but I never thought of it as anything serious. We were playing professional basketball. It wasn't kids' play. We could take it and we could give it out. But I wanted to contribute, even if it meant waving that towel. I

selected the last seat on the bench deliberately. It was symbolic — the team was powerful from the beginning of the bench, where K.C. and the coaching staff sat, to the end where I was. As I said, I was ready and willing to contribute in any way possible.

The Celtics will be helped greatly this playoff season by the emergence of players like Dirk Minniefield, Jim Paxson, Fred Roberts, Mark Acres, and of course, the veterans Artis Gilmore and Bill Walton. I think this group will help the starters in many, many ways because

they have a thorough idea of what K.C. expects from them. Go out and play a few minutes and stay within both the system and the game plan. That is, if you're Dirk or Paxson, run the offense and move without the ball, respectively.

And the tall timber — I can't overstate the depth of this team in the center. This means that Robert can go out and play with abandon, taking all those fouls in the name of playing hard and aggressively, knowing there are credible reserves behind him.

Aggressiveness . . . that is what will win it or not for our team this season. I think the team is primed to go after the championship again. I was at practice last week, and you could just sense that from the eagerness in the team. The scrimmages were loose, but they were serious. I read later that K.C. had scheduled a workout stressing fundamentals, but the guys were anxious to play the game. K.C. let them scrimmage the entire day.

Coaching . . . that's another advantage for the Celtics as they head into the playoffs. In a season where the players were injured and out of synch, K.C. kept after them in a professional manner, on a daily basis. During a game, I believe he is the best bench coach in the game, a man with a feel for the ebb and flow of the game. And in the playoffs: K.C. and his staff have taken the team to The Finals four straight seasons. There's a heritage of success and experience at the head of the team.

Defining roles, whether on the floor, where Larry and Danny will keep the defense spread with outside shooting and Robert will sacrifice his offense and concentrate on rebounding, counts for everything. And an active role must be maintained on the bench. It's a subtle factor; when the team looks over to the bench and sees support, they'll try harder. And the opponent will know he's facing a unified team.

Boston Celtics Caribbean Cruise

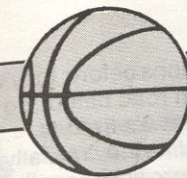
SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS — AUGUST 27 - SEPTEMBER 3, 1988



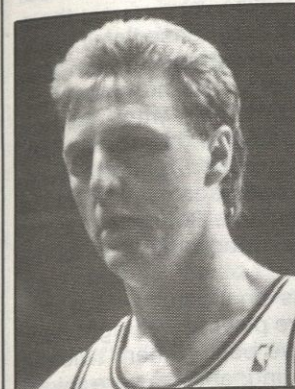
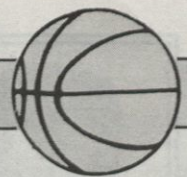
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ROUNDBALL SPOKEN HERE



Larry Bird

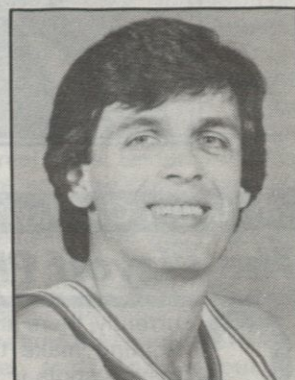
Larry Bird, after setting a new Celtics' record for three-point field goals with seven such shots in a 110-101 victory over the Mavericks: "The Mavericks didn't come out after me until the end of the game. But when you hit a couple of three-pointers, it extends the defense out. They were running out, but they just weren't getting out there quick enough. You have to protect against layups before you stop three-pointers. Our inside attack makes them pack it in usually. I always say, if they're not going to stop it, you've got to keep doing it."



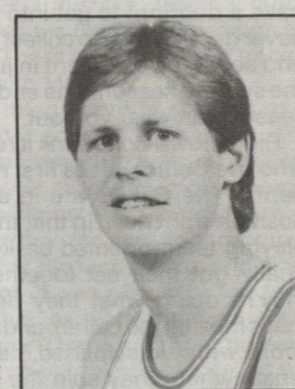
Bob Cousy

Bob Cousy comments on how his great playmaking abilities elevated him to near-myth: "Without being unduly humble, I don't live in the past. I'd be lying if I said that when I see some old film clips of myself that it doesn't get my attention. And I take pride in being recognized by my peers for the things I accomplished. So, fine, at one point in your life, you were considered close to the best or the best player in the game. But you've got to maintain your perspective and balance because in the long run, basketball is still just a child's game. I've been very fortunate that whatever my family and I have at this point, literally has come through participation in this game. And I take great pride in what the Celtics accomplished over the years, and my having played a part in it."

Kevin McHale was asked if all of the Detroit Pistons' acrimonious talk helps the Celtics' motivation when the teams play: "I honestly don't think too much about that. If I were a young player, then maybe that kind of talk might have an effect. But at this level, if you need another team's talk to fire you up, then you're in the wrong business."



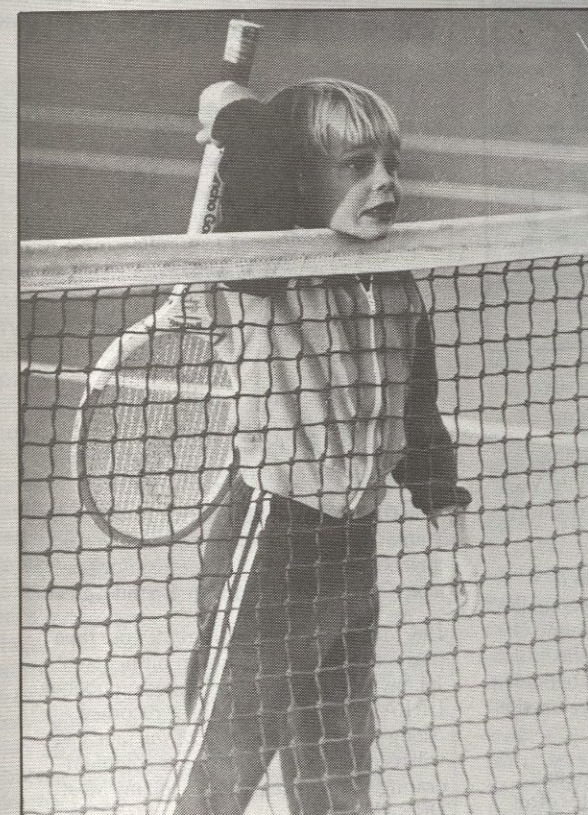
Kevin McHale



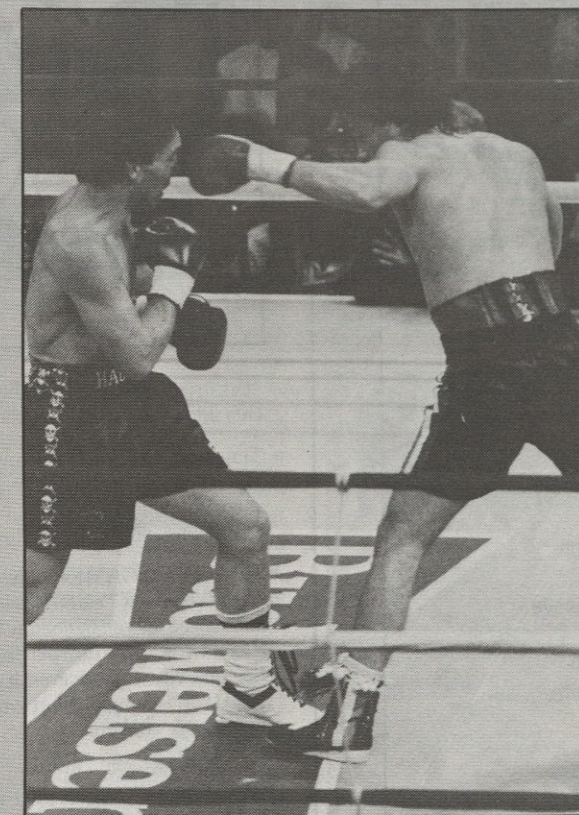
Danny Ainge

Danny Ainge, on the Celtics' losing a thirty-point third quarter lead to the Philadelphia 76ers, March 25th: "What happened to us was worse than losing a twenty-eight point lead to the Knicks in the 1985-86 season, on Christmas Day. Both of those losses have to be considered dark days in Celtics history."

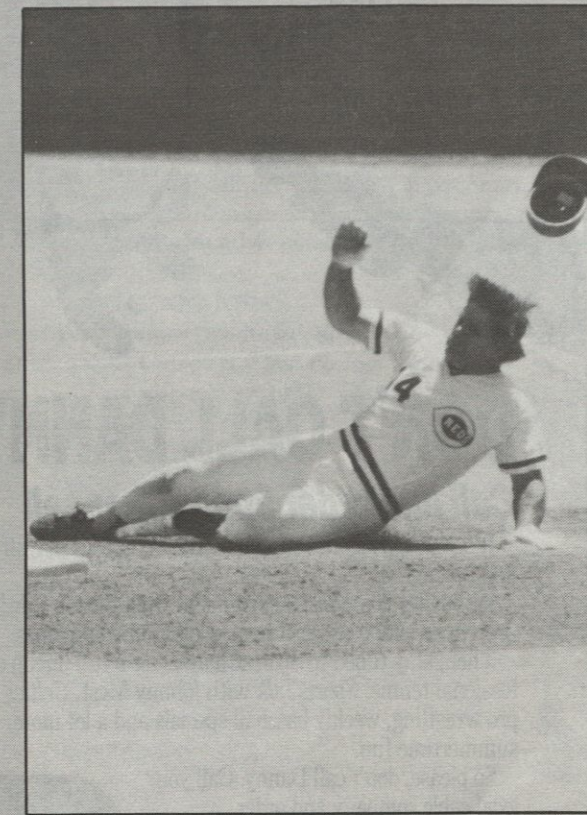
Kodak/Celtics Pride Photo Contest Winners



1st Place



2nd Place



3rd Place

Pictured above are the first, second and third place finishers in this month's Kodak/Celtics Pride Photo Contest. First place was awarded to Howard Peelle of Amherst, MA. For his efforts, Howard will receive several exciting prizes, among which is the opportunity to sit courtside and photograph a Celtics game at Boston Garden, and a Kodak 35mm camera. Second and third

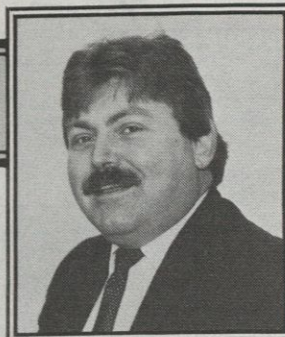
places were awarded to David Silverman of Cranston, RI, and Andrew Dinerman of Wyoming, OH, respectively. Both David and Andrew will receive the following prizes:

- A personally autographed color photo enlargement of their favorite Celtic.

- Home of the Brave, the 1987 Celtics highlight film.
- A complimentary 1-year subscription to *Celtics Pride*.
- Kodak film.

Congratulations from Kodak and *Celtics Pride*.





CALLING THE GAME

By Glenn Ordway

The Playoff Picture

Currently, there are five teams fighting make the last few playoff spots in the Eastern Conference. I don't know how much of a factor they would be in the first round, though. Usually, teams that have a dogfight to get into the playoffs never get a chance to collect their breath, and seem to be content in just reaching the second season. The end of a regular season can wear you out.

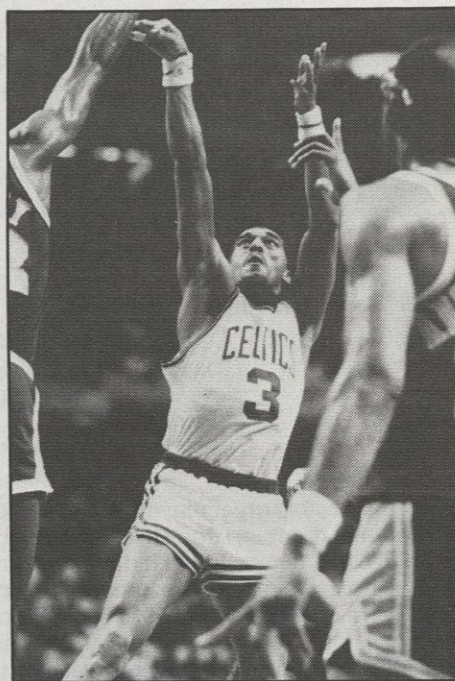
Right now, I don't think it really matters who the Celtics get as first round opponents. The Celtics are in a very good position right now, in that they're finally playing team-oriented basketball. They finally got their act together to where they're doing what they do best. And that's moving the ball around. The Celtics score with a disciplined, half-court offense, where they spin the ball around

and find the open guy.

The emergence suddenly, of Kevin McHale as a passer, changes dramatically what defenses can do to the Celtics. Dennis is suddenly hitting that outside shot. Between the two of them, they can make a lot of things happen. McHale, when he is double- or triple-teamed, instead of trying to make the shot himself, is kicking the ball outside on the wing to Dennis, who's usually open. Dennis now has the option of shooting the open jumper or passing it back inside to Kevin, for an even better shot that Kevin saw earlier. Kevin now realizes that when he passes the ball off, many times it's going to come back to him. And back to him in a better position to score.

The other thing we're seeing on this ballclub is just how well Jim Paxson can play without the ball. When this team is playing that disciplined, team-oriented style, Paxson's going to be a major factor.

Looking at some first-round opponents: Cleveland is a possibility, but despite the fact that Boston does not play well at Cleveland, I don't think the Cavs have much of a chance against the Celtics. With that much youth on the team, I can't see how Cleveland can react to the Celtics. The Celtics will play good team basketball, but more importantly, they're seasoned veterans, they don't get



Dennis Johnson: Hitting the Jumper

rattled in certain situations. Younger ballclubs will get rattled and can make a lot of mistakes in key situations. The advantage the Celtics have is that they've

been in all situations before; they've been down the playoff road before, so they're familiar with what it's like.

Indiana looks like they're really slumping, they look more and more like a team fighting to get out of the picture. This is a team which is also very young; there aren't too many experienced players.

Of the probable first round opponents, Washington probably has the most experience, in Moses Malone, who's won an NBA championship, and Bernard King, who's been in a playoff situation before, and has played well against the Celtics in a playoff situation. But again, I don't feel they have enough talent to worry about.

New York is an upstart team, and although they're playing well right now, the Celtics have beaten them twice in their own building, and I'm sure things like that can start weighing on their minds. I doubt very much if we'll see Philadelphia even on the scene this year — they just can't match up. Really they only have one player, and he's trying to do too much.

Now that the Celtics are playing this well, I don't see that much of a threat in the first round. The way they're playing now, the series ought to run about four games. There's a good shot it will end at three. The third game of the playoffs is often the key. It can decide the difference between a short series and a long one. If a team can go up 3-0 in a seven-game series, it can be very demoralizing to the other team.



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Hawks' Broadcaster John Sterling Looks Ahead to Playoffs

The View from Atlanta



John Sterling: Voice of the Hawks

Atlanta broadcaster, John Sterling can be considered a seasoned veteran, calling games in many different sports. For example, he's broadcast WHA hockey, ABA basketball (the Nets), Islander hockey, Washington Bullets games (on TV), as well as the Atlanta Braves and Hawks. For the last five years, John has been doing both the Atlanta teams concurrently for a total broadcasting schedule of 230 games a year. This incredible work schedule has not dampened his enthusiasm for either club. He was able to take some time to spend with *Celtics Pride* after a recent Hawk winning streak.

CELTICS PRIDE: How are the Hawks shaping up for the playoffs?

STERLING: It's interesting, my answer will just go to show how people, even those most closely associated with the team, can never tell about a ballclub. Not long ago, the Hawks played the Washington Bullets in what had to be one of the worst games they had ever played. It was the culmination of a terrible trip on the road. It was a low-point in the season. Since that time, Detroit has gone on to lose 5 out of 6, including a loss to the Hawks before 48,000 at the Silverdome, but the Hawks went on to win five straight and pulled within a game of Detroit in the loss column. If someone had asked me that question a few weeks ago, I would have said that the Hawks were playing terribly poor defense, and, without Dominique, can't score. But for whatever reason, the team has come together, despite the loss of Koncak. This team has regained its defensive intensity, and they have never passed the ball better. This is a team whose offense feeds off their defense, and recently, both have really come together.

CELTICS PRIDE: How do you feel the Hawks match up with the Celtics?

STERLING: I don't think the Hawks match up with the Celtics. You can get prejudiced in this or any other league. All you see is your team. Boston's been having an up and down year, for them. They've been having a lot of close games, and a lot of uncharacteristic losses. But whenever they play the Hawks, they beat the tar out of them. They've beaten them both at home and at the Omni, because the Hawks just don't match up well with them. Boston passes the ball so well, and can control the tempo against the Hawks. If Atlanta met Boston in the Eastern Final, you'd have to be a hopeless optimist pollyanna to say that the Hawks could take one at the Garden. Personally, I think Boston has the best team in the East. They're a group of All-Stars, you have to double up on them, yet the minute you do, they pass the ball so quickly that they find an open jumper. Now, with Paxson they have six guys who can consistently hit a jump shot. Boston has to be a clear cut favorite to win the East.

CELTICS PRIDE: In a way, the Hawks match up better with the Lakers.

STERLING: Both times these teams met, the Lakers came away victorious, but the Hawks could have won either game, so yes, I'd have to say the Hawks would rather play the Lakers. Of course, it might not mean much because they have to get past the Celtics in order to play the Lakers.

CELTICS PRIDE: How deep will Mike Fratello go into his bench during the playoffs?

STERLING: The playoffs will allow a coach to play seven or eight players and I think the Hawks will try to work this way. The question mark for Mike Fratello is guard John Battle. He's coming off a very debilitating illness and some nights he has it, others he doesn't. His performance will be critical down the stretch. Right now, Mike is using Livingston and Carr off the bench to replace Willis and Dominique, along with Spud and John Battle behind Rivers and Whitman. So, this is a team that can go nine deep, especially since Scott Hastings has been getting a few minutes. He's not a great athlete, but he is a very smart player, who can shoot from the outside.

CELTICS PRIDE: Obviously, the most exciting player on the Hawks is Dominique Wilkins. What do you think goes unnoticed about his game?

STERLING: You really hit a sore spot with me on this one. I think Dominique is as valuable to his team as anyone in the league. Sometimes he's put into a pigeon-hole by unknowing people as a flamboyant guy who shoots every time he gets the ball. Well, let me tell you something... the Hawks want him to shoot every time. He carries a team when they don't score. Does he take a few bad shots? Yes, but who doesn't? I mean John Havlicek even took a few bad ones. But Dominique revs up the tempo, he plays as hard as he possibly can all the time. He passes, he rebounds, he can play defense... I just think he's the total package. His record for the Hawks speaks for itself. A guy in a New York paper once wrote, "What have the Hawks ever won?" Well, if you think about it, no one has won anything except the Lakers and Celts. I mean, tip your cap to them, but don't knock the others. So there are people who knock Dominique, but he's a terrific player, whose teammates love him, and he's someone who still tries to improve his game. All he does is work his butt off. There are some superstars who are real s.o.b.'s and what's their coach gonna do? Fire them? But not 'Nique, he's a great guy.

CELTICS PRIDE: Where does the strength of the Hawks' organization lie?

STERLING: It lies with two people, Stan Kasten, who's kind of self-taught about basketball, and so bright and intelligent. He's president of both the Hawks and Braves, and sets a calm scene for both organizations. There is no internecine fighting in either organization. Stan is able to ask the right questions, get the right material and work effectively within the organization. The other key to this club is Mike Fratello, who is just an excellent basketball coach. The bottom line is that any team is only as good as its players, and Mike gets the best out of the players here.

CELTICS PRIDE: What will the Hawks be looking for in the draft this year?

STERLING: This will be an interesting draft because of the expansion teams and the consequent dispersal draft. The Hawks will be one of the few teams that will honestly be affected by the dispersal draft. We're a very deep club that will definitely lose a contributing player to an expansion club. This makes the college draft that much more important to Atlanta, because they definitely will lose a player. The kind of player the Hawks need is a Dale Ellis clone, someone who can fill it up. I mean, let's be honest, the Hawks are not a great shooting team. John Battle might be that player. He was becoming a star, but his play went down. Nobody knew it at the time, but he was in the incubation period of hepatitis. But even with Battle's return, the Hawks still need a bona fide 20 point-a-night scorer.

CELTICS PRIDE: Your thoughts on the Celtics?

STERLING: Well, if you think about it, there are only two teams better than the Hawks: Boston and Los Angeles. This isn't a knock on the Hawks, it's a boost to the Celtics and Lakers. They're truly great teams, jammed with great talent. How much better can they get? You know, Kevin McHale is unstoppable, Parish is a great center, Dennis Johnson, Danny Ainge, and now Paxson make an excellent back court and to top it off you have the greatest player who ever lived in Larry Bird. I mean, how much more do you want? No one can beat them — they're always the better team. What can you say about the Lakers that hasn't already been said? Think about the luxury of having a 6'9" point guard who is like a quarterback in football. He touches the ball on every play, and very rarely makes a mistake. Magic's fabulous, he gives his teammates layups all game long. That's how the Lakers unbalance you, with Magic.

The one thing about basketball as a sport is that it constantly changes. For instance, now there are no true position players around much any more. Everyone can do almost everything. Look at Charles Barkley. He can rip a rebound down, dribble through traffic, and slam home a shot in one play. Not too long ago, if you had a great center, you were going to win. That's just not the case now. It just goes to show how good the players in the NBA actually are. So there really aren't any positions anymore. Players play all over the floor. So the NBA has changed again, and really for the better.

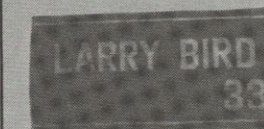
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Fifth Annual Fashion Show Raises Over \$150,000

Celtics 'Dress Up' for Special Olympians

For five years now, the Boston Celtics players and staff and their families have joined together to stage a special fundraising evening for some special recipients — the handicapped athletes of Massachusetts Special Olympics. The fifth annual show, held on Wednesday, April 6th at the Marriott Copley Hotel in Boston, surpassed even the success of its predecessors.

It was at the height of fashion that nearly every member of the Celtics

family came together to model the latest styles of Yolanda's of Waltham and The Casual Male. Under the direction of Yolanda Celucci and Dusty Rhodes of leading Boston PR firm Conventures, Inc., the 1988 show was a glittering and glitzy conglomeration of fashion and high technology, featuring a laser show staged by Image Engineering of Cambridge. The show was highlighted by a song performed by K.C. Jones and Sylvia Carr, wife of M.L., to the accompaniment

of Java Jive.

At the core of the festivities was the evening's purpose: to raise funds for the benefit of Massachusetts Special Olympics. In fact, a number of Special Olympians participated in the Fashion Show, and several others made a special presentation to Celtics co-owner Don F. Gaston and his wife Paula, the co-chairpeople of the event. This year the special auction held at the evening's end was largely responsible for the incremental increase

in the dollars raised. Under the direction of Boston Globe sportswriter Will McDonough and M.L. Carr, proceeds from the auction of Celtics memorabilia and souvenirs and assorted miscellaneous trips once again reached new heights. When coupled with the income from the sale of tickets to the evening gala, the total take for Massachusetts Special Olympics was over \$150,000. It was a special evening for a worthy cause done, as always with the Celtics, with style.



Dirk Minniefeld & Reggie Lewis



Yolanda with Charlie Austin of Channel 4



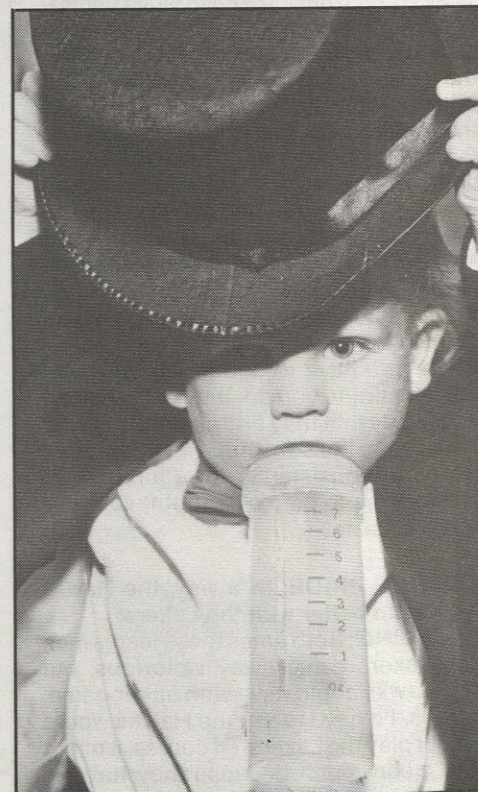
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K.C. Jones and Sylvia Carr



The Paxson Family



Kevin's son is all class.



Bill Walton: The Tie that Binds.



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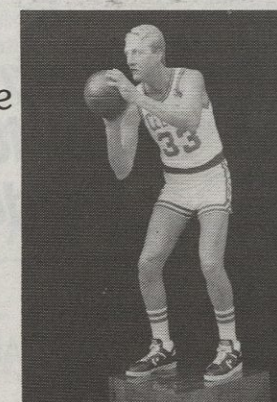
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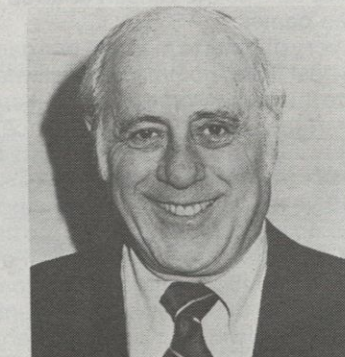
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THE BEST DAY THEY EVER HAD

Larry Bird's Game Seven vs. New York in 1984

Larry Bird is the singular force that drives the Boston Celtics in the eighties. He has accomplished so many feats. Three-time Most Valuable Player and the first player who wasn't a center to win the award. This season he will likely win it again. Larry Bird is the rare athlete as artist; when one thinks of athletes and attempts to transpose their feats into other professions, the allowance must first be made for the athlete's relatively short active lifespan. Great players, regardless how brilliant, usually begin losing their luster as they age. Skills decline and motivation wanes. Great writers and craftsmen, to take two examples, ideally reach their finest seasons as they age, as they gain experience. Larry Bird is a unique man however; Bird proclaimed to reporters during the 1985 playoffs that "you probably won't see much new from me, now. I've basically reached my level (of accomplishment). There aren't many new things I'll do from now on."

Bird was 28 when he said that, and had just completed a brilliant individual scoring season (28.7 ppg, including a Celtics' record 60). Indeed his individual game hadn't ever been better. And yet, contrary to his quote, more and better things would ensue. Bird stormed back the following season to win the league and playoff MVPs in 1986, maintained that high level last season, and has returned again this year, to play even better. Trimmer, craftier, quicker, and as determined to win; his scoring average rested at 30.2 as the season entered its final ten games.

"It's very difficult to pinpoint one game as 'the best,'" Bird commented last week. He gave the matter some thought. Would he select the Game Six performance in the 1981 Finals at Houston, when he came off the bench in the fourth quarter to nail five straight bombs, including a three-point field goal to wrap up the first title of the Bird Era? The Game Four Final win in 1984, while shooting only 9-24, he nevertheless had 21 rebounds and the game winner over Magic Johnson on the road against the Lakers? The 60 against the Hawks in New Orleans? or last season's steal, when Bird saved the season with a game-winning steal of an Isiah Thomas pass? After that game, Bird, who usually shrugs his achievements off and proceeds onward, paused too; for the briefest of moments, he sensed just what he was doing to preserve the glorious Celtics tradition.

"The only games I guess I could consider are the ones that contribute to a championship," Bird said last week at Hellenic College. "I guess the Game Seven win over the Knicks in the 1984 semi-final series was as important a game as I've played. I was shooting real well and I was also in good 'synch' with the rest of the guys. Our team played very well."

"The important factor is that we went on to win another championship that year. I think it's a matter of accomplishment and it's a point of respect. Win one title and it may be a fluke. Win another and people understand that you have what it takes to win."



Larry Bird: Controlled the Game

Game Seven of the 1984 semi-final series between the Celtics and the New York Knicks featured a renewal of the rivalry which highlighted NBA basketball in the seventies. Bird was the star figure for the Celtics in that season, the first with K.C. Jones as coach. Cedric Maxwell played opposite Bird at forward with Dennis Johnson, Gerald Henderson and Robert Parish completing the starting group. The hub of the New York wheel was Bernard King, who was playing spectacularly that year. King had averaged 26.3 ppg and had carried the Knicks with a lightning-quick scoring attack. The series proved to be as exciting and explosive as King's scoring punch. The playoffs were another homecourt affair; each team won every game played on their floor, and Game Seven was decided at the Boston Garden.

Among the series highlights were: Maxwell and McHale completely shutting down King in Game One, after Bernard had eliminated Detroit the previous game with 46. King asserting himself with 40 in Game Four, as the Knicks evened the series at two games each; then, in Game Five, after Bird and Dennis Johnson delighted the Boston crowd with a fast break that featured behind-the-back passes by each man; Darryl Walker and Danny Ainge fought — Ainge and Walker and the fourteen others who were involved in the melee were fined a total of \$3,750 by the NBA.

Then, in Game Six, as the Celtics rallied in an attempt to close out the Knicks in New York. Rory Sparrow dropped Bird as the superstar was heading to the basket on a breakaway. Boston shut out the Knicks after that mid-fourth quarter incident, but fell short, 106-104, to set up Game Seven.

It was the finest hour of Larry Bird's magnificent career. Bird scorched the Knicks for 39 points — to that time, his playoff career high. The teams would spar cautiously in the opening minutes, but Bird suddenly connected on three long, soft, arching jumpers. Boston shot

ward, "Bird's game was it." The Celtics continued to apply the pressure and led 96-75 at the end of three quarters. Boston would go on to win, 121-104, and Bird would play sparingly in the fourth quarter. He had 37 after three.

"It wasn't so much the points," remarked his backup in those years, Scott Wedman. "It was his intensity, his concentration. I have never seen a player so completely involved with the game as Larry was in that series. In fact, those entire playoffs that year. He controlled that game. There was absolutely no way we were going to lose that game, that series."

M.L. Carr remembered an incident later in those 1984 playoffs as the team was returning home from Milwaukee after a fourth game defeat. "I remember Larry saying to the guys on the plane, 'Let's win it for K.C.' That was a significant statement, coming from the leader of the team, to support the coach that way. I think that said a lot about our commitment that year."

"That's the idea," Bird stated. "You play basketball to win championships as a team. Every year I'm playing, I hope I'll go back and want to keep working on my game. I don't ever want to let up, as long as I'm playing. But there's always that special feeling in the summer, when you've won the championship. There's a happiness, satisfaction professionally."

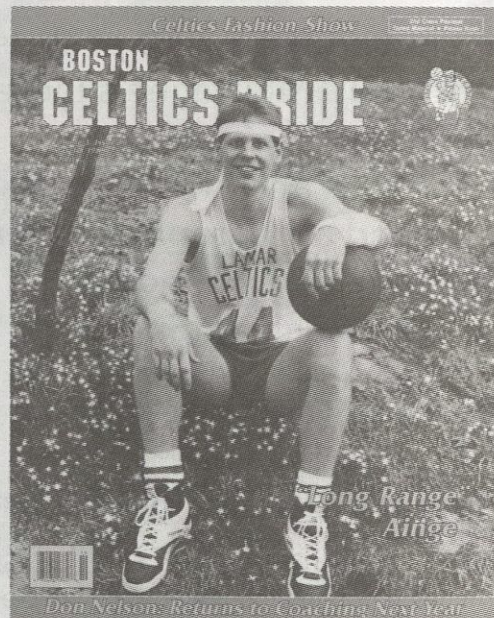
out to a 36-26 first quarter lead, and the rout began. The Celtics led 67-52 at halftime. "If there ever was a game in which a textbook performance could be shown about the subject of basketball," said Knicks' coach Hubie Brown after-

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Celtics Veterans of '86 Still Faring Well Alumni Reunion



Jerry Sichting: "Job to do."

think he'll give it an honest shot."

These are words that must have been heard by fellow bench-player Rick Carlisle. Rick was cut this season by the Celtics, another painful Jones decision. Yet, Conner Henry did appear to have won the spot and Carlisle, a musician disguised as a small forward-guard, kept pursuing the dream — with the Albany Patroons of the CBA. The trip was a brief one. Almost immediately the New York Knicks picked Carlisle up and the player quickly contributed by nailing nine of ten field goal attempts as the Knicks began a season-long comeback by nearly

The news wasn't good that winter day in 1986. K.C. Jones was forced to cut David Thirdkill, a rugged veteran of the Sweet Sixteen championship team of the previous season. The small forward had been an effective role player for the Celtics that season, making the most of his limited playing time, refusing to force shots even when the occasional twenty-footer loomed clear. "I can hit that shot," Thirdkill said, "but I know if I take it, I'll probably come out of the game. Scoring isn't as important to me as doing the thing that's expected of me by K.C." Thirdkill has meandered from his beloved spot in the NBA, now hoping to catch on with another team when expansion comes around. "I hadn't any problem at all with David," commented Jones later. "It was a numbers thing, and it's never pleasant."

Thirdkill played this season with the Rochester Flyers in the Continental Basketball Association and had a great season. He averaged 21.3 ppg, which placed him eleventh in the circuit in scoring. Tommy Davis of Pensacola led the league in scoring with a 28.5 mark this season. The Flyers were edged out of a playoff spot in the last week, losing it by nine points (in the CBA, a scoring system allows three points for a win and a point for each quarter the team out-scores the opponent). Thirdkill added another dimension to his career in basketball as well; after the firing of the Flyers' coach Bill Klucas in March, Thirdkill, for the fifth time, coached the Flyers.

His tenure was one game, as it was on the other occasions, but the leadership qualities that the soft-spoken Thirdkill has are increasingly being recognized. "I think people are beginning to see that David is a quality athlete," said a spokesman for the league. "David was the outstanding player in the league All-Star game. He scored 21 points to lead all scorers, and most thought he was the MVP, but Michael Brooks (formerly of LaSalle and the Clippers) edged him out. Does he have a future in the NBA? I

Greg Kite of the LA Clippers and Jerry Sichting of the Portland Trail Blazers are doing for teams out West. Kite has played well for the Clippers, averaging 5 points and 4 rebounds a game coming off the bench behind the much-maligned Benoit Benjamin. Recently he hit 17 of 18 free throws for the Clippers, and he's evidence that the Celtics' tradition of excellence rubs off on men in more ways than one. Kite learned how to win championships with the Celtics, but by practicing against Robert Parish and Bill Walton for two seasons, his game grew, too. He said, "I faced a lot of criticism when I played here. But I just want to go out and play ball. If I'm all right, I'll stay. If not, the coach will tell me about it. Criticism does nothing but complicate my life off the court." This offered in a private conversation.

Jerry Sichting has continued to come off the bench for the Trail Blazers since leaving Boston (a decision Jan Volk hated to make. Sichting was one of the most popular Celtics on the team — an effective player on the court and a willing, ideal team personality off it.) "It's one of those things," commented Sichting later. "It's a business. I have nothing but fine things to say about the Celtics experience. I wish them well, but I have a job to do out here. I wish them well, that is, except when we play them." He averaged 3.8 ppg and was shooting .489 with the Blazers, who, with a nine-game winning streak in March, established themselves as a dark-horse candidate to unseat the Lakers.

Thirdkill, Carlisle, Kite and Sichting were outstanding contributors as the Celtics won in 1986. They had an idea of what Jones wanted when they played, however extensive or limited that playing time was. They continue to acquit themselves well in their playing lives after Boston.

Young Gymnasts from Joan's Gym Entertain Garden Crowd



Fans attending the Celtics game against the Detroit Pistons on April 1st were treated to a special halftime entertainment when the young gymnastics students from Joan's Gym, a Boston-area gymnastics school, put on a show.



CELTICS MOSTS

Hondo's Playoff Scoring Mark of 54 vs. the Hawks

John Havlicek ranks among the greatest players in the history of the National Basketball Association. His talent, durability and intelligence created a standard for the league. Havlicek is the holder of the Celtics' single-game playoff scoring mark, 54, which he tallied in Game One of the 1973 Eastern Conference semi-final against the Atlanta Hawks. The game was the beginning of what most observers thought would be a Celtics run for the NBA title. Havlicek and the Celtics soon found out though, that it was not to be in '73.

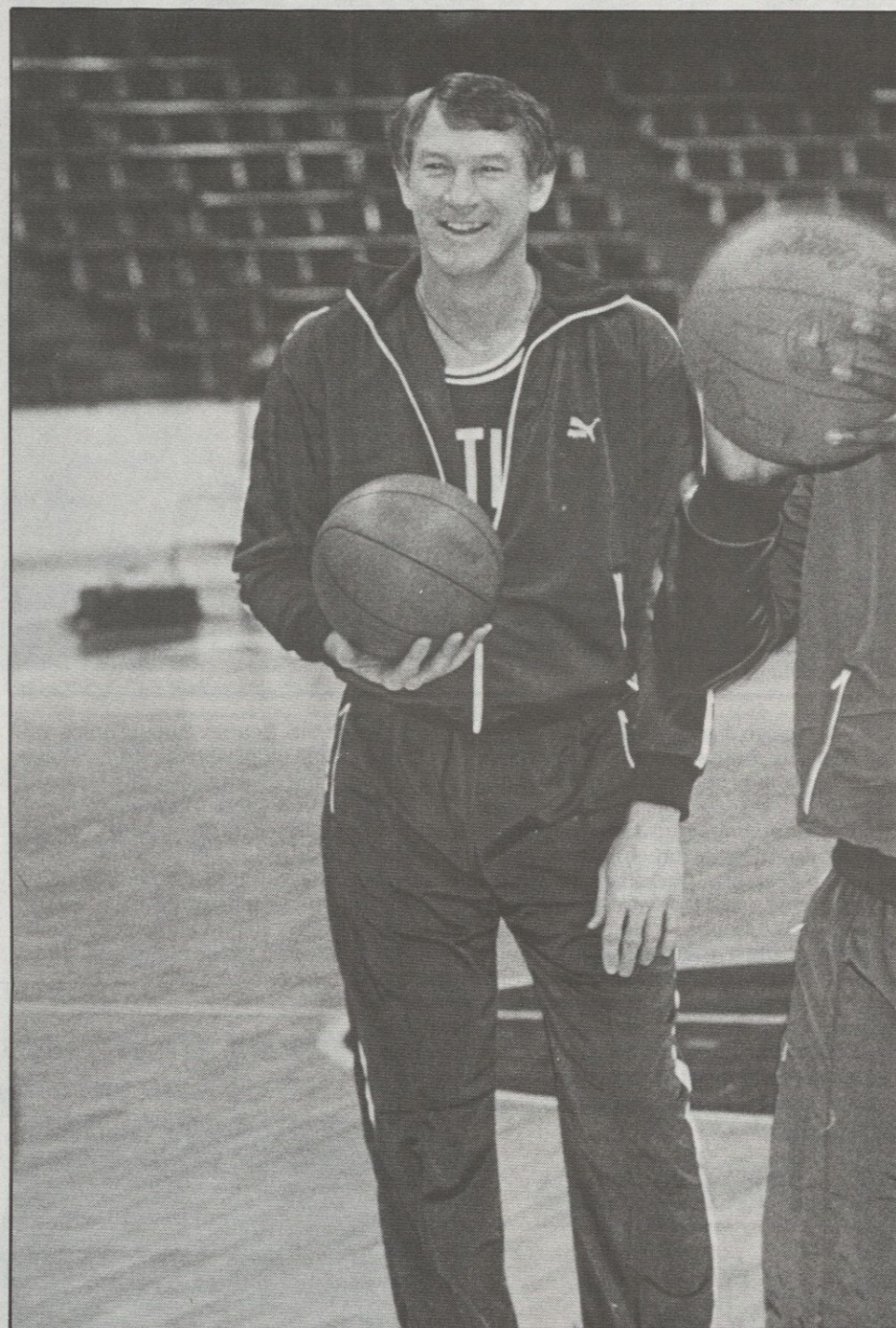
"I think that the memory of scoring so many points in one game is something that exists side by side with us losing that year," Havlicek recalled in an interview in 1987. "We thought we had the best team in the league that year."

Hondo opened the playoffs with a scoring flurry that gave the Celtics reason to think their highest expectations would be fulfilled. As the Celtics attacked the Hawks with a fast-break that characterized their best play that season, Havlicek led the way. He had an astounding 24 points in the first half as the Celtics opened up a 59-43 lead.

"That was the way we played that year," recalled Havlicek, "although I didn't always score that many points. What we could do to teams though, was outrun them and outdefend them. Then we could score bunches of points off of the running game. Our confidence soared. The memorable aspect of that season is that we were able to sustain the pressure on teams all year."

The Celtics featured the second-best offense in the league (223.8) and the sixth-best defense (104.5), the best player in the league, Dave Cowens, and a versatile, balanced attack featuring Havlicek, Don Nelson and Paul Silas at forward and with JoJo White, Don Chaney and Paul Westphal at guard. Silas and Westphal came off the bench, as did the veteran Satch Sanders.

"What I remember about that team," Celtics President Red Auerbach said last week, "is they were always extremely aggressive. They hadn't any fear. Dave Cowens used to play with five fouls all



Hondo shot the lights out vs. the Hawks

strong young nucleus that year, led by the prolific scoring tandem of Sweet Lou Hudson and Piston Pete Maravich. The latter was a flashy talent hovering on the edge of superstardom; Maravich's gentle touch from the outside was merely one weapon in his arsenal. He was a creative passer, a hard worker and finally had found a degree of acceptance within his own team. Havlicek and company immediately went to work in Game One.

The Celtics regular season scoring record for a single game, until this contest, had been Sam Jones' 51, which the former Celtics guard tallied against the Detroit Pistons in the opening part of the 1965-66 season. That record would fall beneath Havlicek's opening game salvo against the Hawks. Havlicek also set the Celtics' playoff record for a half, tallying 30 as the Celtics romped in the contest, 134-109.

"It's ironic, in retrospect, because that game was misleading. We had played at such a high level all season long, so defeating the Hawks that way wasn't really surprising. It changed though; they gave us a real battle (Pete Maravich scored 37 in Game Four, as the Hawks averted a sweep). Then in a shocker Atlanta won again in Game Five back at the Garden, before the Celtics won Game Six in Atlanta behind JoJo White. I remember that when we finally won the series, we ran off 22 straight points in the last game and we felt we were ready to take the championship.

"But then I hurt my shoulder in the third game (a dislocation) and it was uphill after that." This was the championship that got away, as George Sullivan so aptly described it in *The Picture History of the Boston Celtics*. After the Cs and Knicks (Willis Reed, Walt Frazier, Senator Bill Bradley, Dave DeBusschere and Earl Monroe) split home and home to open the second playoff series, Havlicek suffered the injury to his right (shooting and ballhandling) shoulder in a Game Three loss at Boston. He would return for the fifth game and play lefthanded throughout the remainder of the series, but the Celtics, after rallying from 1-3 in the series, to force a seventh game in Boston, would lose that finale, 94-78. "It was ironic, because I thought everything was working out perfectly as we headed into the Knicks' series. We had struggled to beat Atlanta, but we had come through it fine. I had played hard and my shots were falling in that first game. I thought it was a sign that it was going to be our year.

"But everything would work out. We didn't have nearly the high-quality season the following year; we seemed to struggle for everything we achieved, but because we had the persistence and endurance, we beat New York in the (1974) playoffs and then won the championship over Milwaukee in seven games. I shot the lights out in that playoff game in 1973 against the Hawks. But the reason we won the 1974 championship was because our team played the best team defense of any team I played on in the seventies," Havlicek concluded. The 1974 Playoff's Most Valuable Player: John Havlicek.

the time. They just came out and ran." The team's coach, Tom Heinsohn, designed the offense around the running game and the versatile skills of Cowens and Havlicek. The Celtics overran the entire league that season, finishing with a glamorous 68-14 record and sweeping into the playoffs on a high note.

"We were at the peak of our rebuilding effort," said Havlicek. "We had some rough moments at mid-season (when I was out with a bad knee). The Lakers had been the team the previous season, but they were hampered, because Jerry West was injured a lot that year. We thought we could win the championship with ease. Our hardest task was to get through the East, because the Knicks were our toughest competitors. But we had the home-court and we were very confident against them, despite the fact that it was such an emotional rivalry."

But first, the Celtics had to overcome the Atlanta Hawks. The Hawks had a

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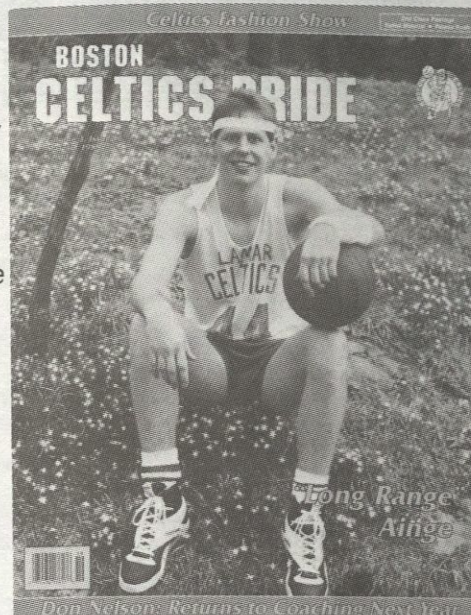
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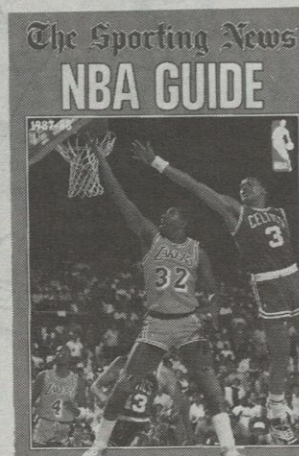
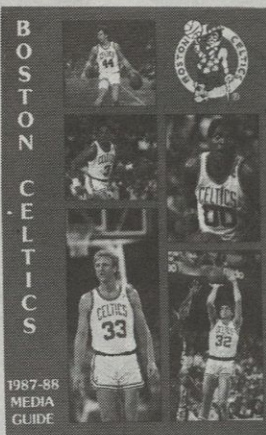


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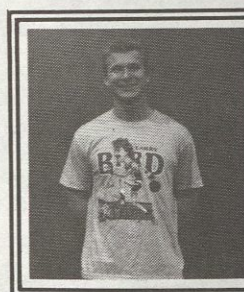
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